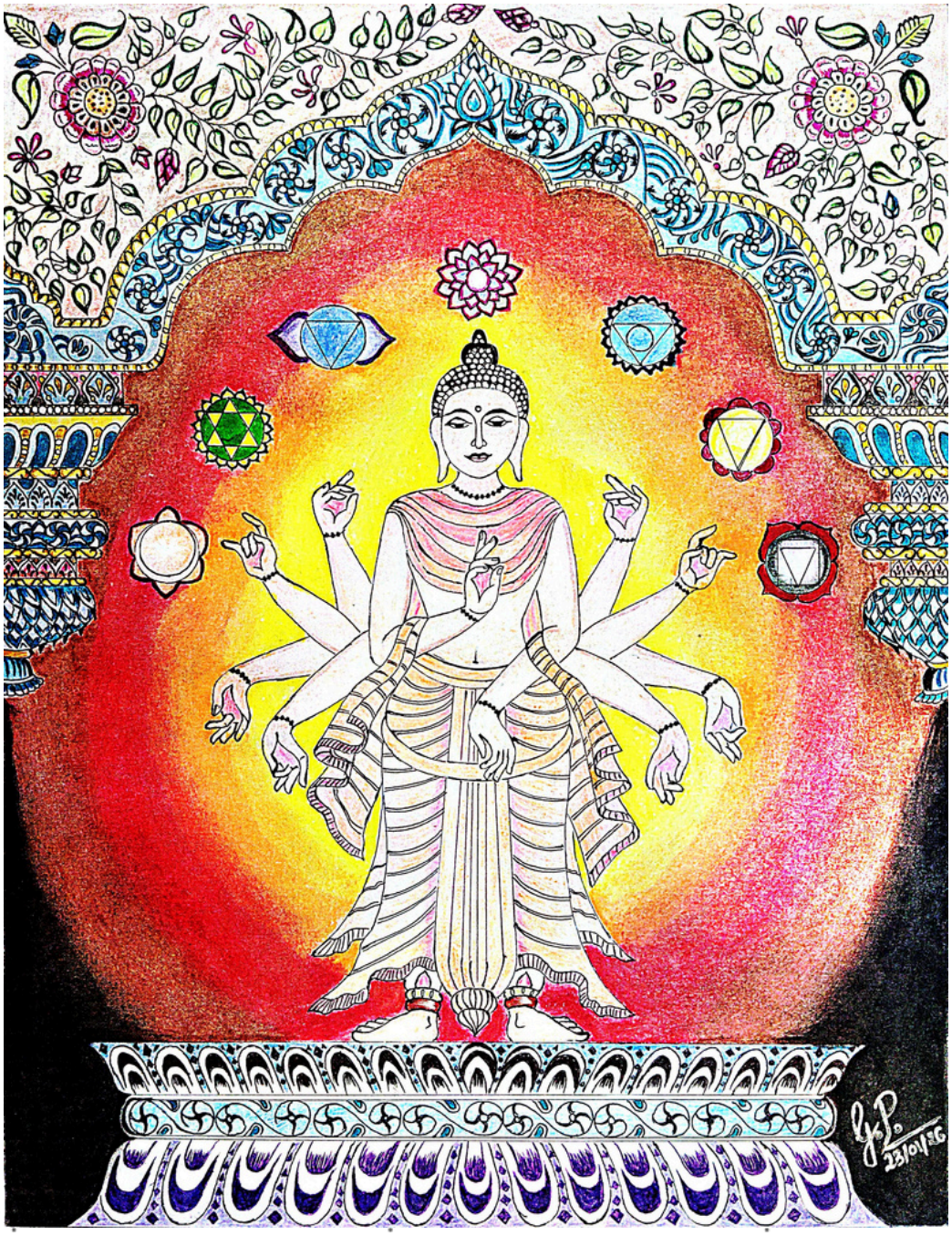
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DEEKSHA – A Journal of Education

[Developing Excellence in Education through Knowledge Skill and Holistic Approach]

(A Peer Reviewed Biannual Online Journal)



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Editorial



Doctor Harisingh Gour Vishwavidyalaya, Sagar, has a long-standing tradition of promoting academic excellence, research integrity, and scholarly engagement. In this spirit, the Department of Education is pleased to host the DEEKSHA – A Journal of Education, a platform envisioned to encourage critical inquiry, innovative thinking, and meaningful dialogue in the field of education and allied disciplines.

The DEEKSHA – A Journal of Education aims to provide researchers, teacher educators, scholars, and practitioners with an academic space to share original research, reflective practices, and interdisciplinary perspectives that address contemporary educational challenges. The journal seeks to nurture scholarly rigour while remaining sensitive to contextual realities, policy developments, and emerging trends in education, teacher preparation, and social transformation.

By hosting this journal, the Department reaffirms its commitment to fostering a vibrant research culture aligned with national priorities, global educational frameworks, and evolving societal needs. I extend my best wishes to the editorial team, contributors, and reviewers for their dedicated efforts in shaping DEEKSHA – A Journal of Education as a credible and impactful academic publication. I am confident that this initiative will significantly contribute to knowledge creation, academic discourse, and professional growth in the field of education.

Prof. Anil Kumar Jain
Head, Department of Education
Dean, School of Educational Studies
Director, Internal Quality Assurance Cell
Doctor Harisingh Gour Vishwavidyalaya, Sagar (MP)

Perception and Attitude of Prospective Teachers towards Teacher Education Programme in India

Debabrata Mandal[1]
Vijay Kumar Yadav[2]

Abstract

This study mainly investigates the Perception and Attitude level of Prospective Teachers towards 21st century Professional Teacher Training Programme of India in the light of NEP-2020. To fulfill the goals of this study, 71 prospective teachers across the 11 states of India were selected randomly. In this study a descriptive survey method was employed by the researcher. Researcher was developed one (1) standardized self-made, 5-point Likert-type scale, named 'Scale to identify Perception and Attitude towards Professional Teachers Training Programme (SIPAPTTP)'. The findings of the study revealed: (i) 't' (.080) values of Male and Female teachers are greater than 0.05 level of significance, that means Perception and Attitude level between Male and Female prospective teachers towards Professional Teachers Training programme doesn't differ significantly; (ii) Similarly, 't' (.202) values of Trained and Untrained teachers are higher than 0.05 level of significance, that means Perception and Attitude level between Trained and Untrained prospective teachers doesn't differ significantly. (iii) The correlation results also revealed that both groups teachers' (Male & Female, Trained & Untrained) Perception and Attitude level are positively high and positively correlated.

Keywords: *Perception, Attitude, Prospective Teachers, Professional Teachers Training Programme, National Education Policy-2020*

Theoretical Background

The National Education Policy-2020 (NEP-2020) is a game-changer in Indian education history, bringing the country's educational system up to date with the demands of the futuristics modern world. In India, NEP-2020, propose a significant transformation in 21st century education via 'an education system rooted in Indian ethos that contributes directly to transforming India, that is Bharat, sustainably into an equitable and vibrant knowledge society, by providing high quality education to all, thereby making India a global knowledge superpower'. NEP-2020 is built upon the 5 guiding pillars of accessibility, equity, quality,

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affordability, and accountability. It will equip our young people to handle the many domestic and international issues of the twenty-first century. In para 15.1 of NEP-2020 states that teacher education is absolutely essential in order to develop a team of school teachers who will form the coming generation. In order to prepare teachers, one must acquire multidisciplinary viewpoints and information, create positive attitudes and values, and practice under the guidance of the ideal mentors (Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India, n.d.). The Justice J S Verma Commission (2012), which was established by the Supreme Court, claimed in paragraph 15.2 of NEP-2020 that the most independent teaching schools, numbering above 10,000, are effectively selling degrees for a price rather than even attempting to provide meaningful teacher education.

Professional Teacher Training and Teaching Profession

Professional teacher training is vital because it will have an important impact on how education is delivered in the future. Professional teacher training is becoming even more crucial in the twenty-first century because of the quick developments and breakthroughs in the educational sector. According to NEP-2020, Composite interdisciplinary institutions that include departments of, sociology, psychology, philosophy, neuroscience, Indian languages, history, arts, and literature in addition to education should be the location of teacher education. According to Usman, Aklahyel, Ibrahim and Adam (2015), a profession is defined as a line of work requiring specific academic coursework and training in order to provide competent services to members of the public, government, and non-governmental organizations for a set charge or salary. Professional teacher training programme should be designed or structured to give teachers the tools they need to carry out their jobs and duties in an efficient manner (T.R.C.N., 2004). According to Elina (2016), teachers with higher levels of qualification appeared to have more positive attitudes than those with lower levels of qualification. In a similar vein, younger educators seem to have greater enthusiasm for their work than more experienced ones.

This study can clarify the crucial role that teacher preparation plays in students' academic success by emphasizing the necessity of providing teachers with continual support and professional development opportunities to keep them up to date on the latest developments in the area of education. Understanding how professional teachers training affects students' academic life, will this study can help to identify the best ways to enhance teacher preparation, which will eventually benefit students' learning results. NEP-2020 predicts that multidisciplinary colleges and universities will progressively replace as the primary hub of

teacher education instead of traditional classrooms by 2030. The focus of this study is mostly on two variables. i.e., Perception and Attitude towards professional teachers training programme and importance of NEP-2020 for professional development of teachers. This this study was disclosed that a number of traits may have a major impact on attitude and perception of the teachers likes: sex, professional status, area of institute, types of the institute, educational level, subject discipline.

Concept of Perception

Perception is strongly connected to attitudes. The method by which organisms decipher and analyse sensory information to derive a coherent understanding of the external environment is known as perception (Lindsay & Norman, 1977).

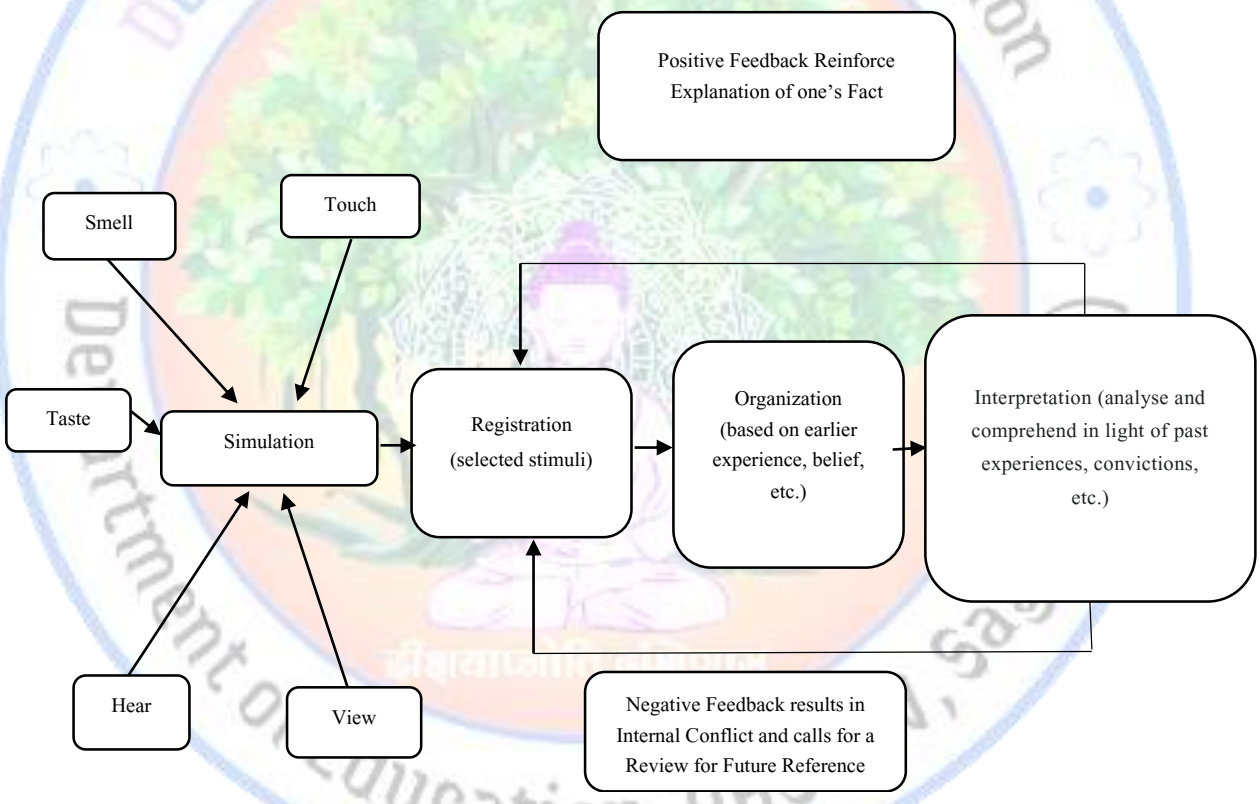


Fig. 1 Perception Processing System

The awareness and acceptance of inputs by an individual are crucial factors in the process of perception. Highly selective receptiveness to the stimuli can be influenced by an individual's preexisting beliefs, experiences, motivations, attitude, and personality. (Assael, 1995). There are four steps in the perception process: Stimulation, registration, organization, and interpretation (see Figure-1). In this study the actual meaning of perception is the belief,

experience, opinion and view point of prospective teachers towards professional training and its impact on students' academic life.

Concept of Attitude

Attitude to professional teachers training is a multidimensional construct. Understanding teachers' attitudes is crucial to comprehending their ideas, working methods, needs, interests, and classroom procedures. In general, there are numerous ways to define attitude. A person's attitude can be defined as a state of mental and neurological preparedness that has been structured by experience and that directs or dynamically affects their behaviors towards all related objects and events (Richardson, 1996 & Ardies, 2013).

ABC Model

Among the most often utilized (Eagly & Chaiken, 1998) (Van den Berg et. al. 2006) attitude models are the ABC model. ABC model states that attitude comprises 3 components; A, B, and C. That is, 'A' for the Affective component, 'B' for the Behavioral component and 'C' for the Cognitive component (see Figure-2).

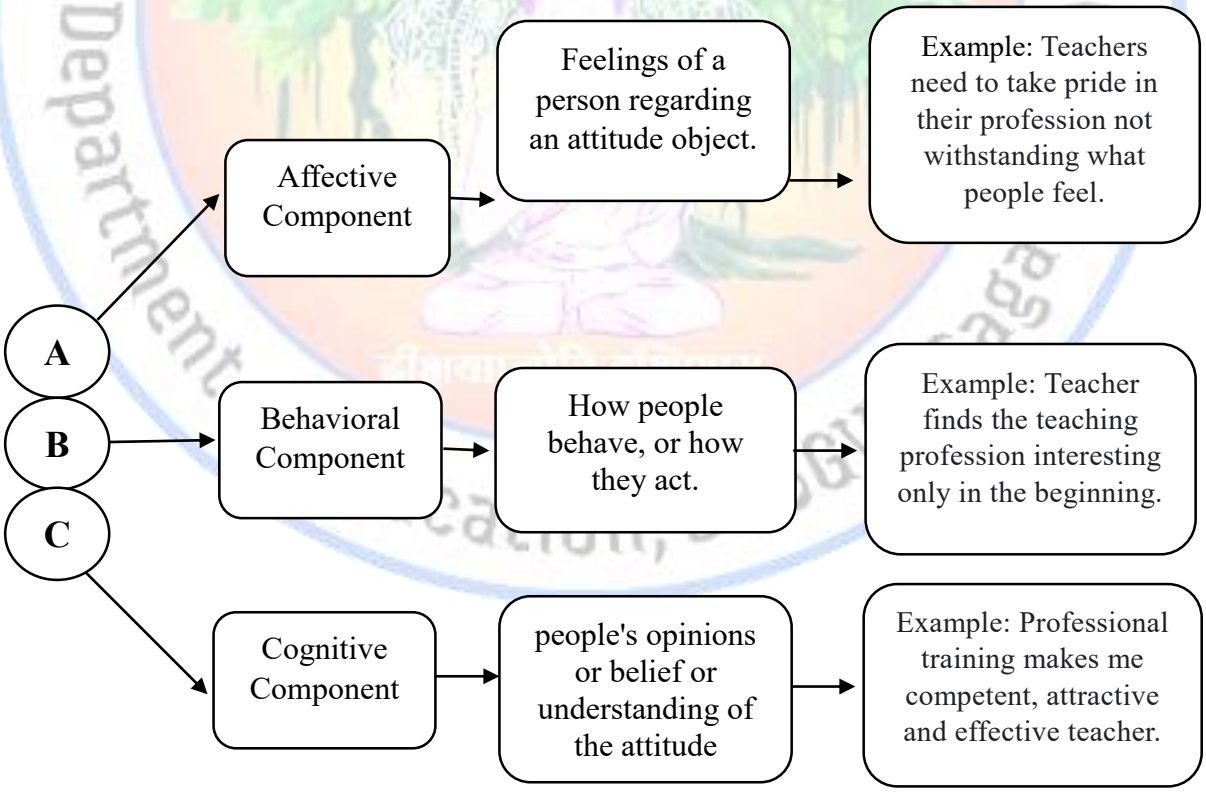


Fig. 2 ABC Model of Attitude

Cognitive-Affective-Conative Model

According to Schiffman & Kanuk (2004), attitudes are built around three (3) elements in the CAC Model:

1. A Cognitive component (beliefs);
2. An Affective component (feelings); and
3. A Conative component (behavior).

It is now generally accepted, after considering several definitions and models, that attitude is a person's mental and neurological readiness, whether positive or negative, for a certain person, location, object or occasion. It includes of 3 elements:

- Affective Component (Neural) (Feelings/Emotion)
- A Behavioral Component (Readiness) (Response/Action)
- Cognitive Component (Mental) (Belief/Evaluation)

Conversely, we are aware that attitudes can be classified into three (3) categories: Positive Attitude, Negative Attitude and Neutral Attitude. A positive attitude is favorable towards other people, things, circumstances, or occasions. A negative attitude is unfavorable, and those who have a neutral attitude don't place as much value on other people, things, circumstances, or events. The prospective teachers' attitudes towards professional teachers training programme might be influenced their decision to look for a career in teaching. This study can offer guidance on how to deal with these attitudes and raise teacher retention rates, which can enhance academic achievement among students and the efficacy of the school as a whole. For the requirement of this study, researcher has been constructed and developed a self-made perception and attitude scale named ‘’Scale to identify Perception and Attitude towards Professional Teachers Training Programme’’ (SIPAPTTP) by following of the above standardized perception and attitude models.

Operational Definition of the Terms Used in the Research

Perception: In this study Perception is the belief, experience, opinion, acceptance and view point of Prospective Teachers towards the Professional Teacher Training Programs.

Attitude: In this study, Attitudes refers prevailing tendency to respond favourably or unfavourably of Prospective Teachers towards Professional Teacher Training Programs

Prospective Teacher: In this study, Prospective Teacher means the Pre-service teacher or future teacher who undergoes full-time training in the teacher education course of various institute in India.

Professional Teacher Training Programme: In this study, Professional Teacher Training means the different kinds of Teacher Training Programmes (i.e. D.El.Ed., B.Ed., ITEP, BA. B.Ed., B.Sc. B.Ed., M.Ed.) are operational for the training purposes of the future teacher in India.

Review of Related Literatures

High-quality education is a vital tool for the advancement of a country. The quality of teachers has a major influence on the level of education that is provided. Similarly, teacher education programs aim to produce teachers with the necessary training and solid professional backgrounds, which utmost requires a positive attitude and key competencies (Bichi and Musa, 2015; Bhargava and Pathy, 2014; Gulbahari et al., 2023). So, to find out whether any different perception and attitude observed among different category teachers towards professional teacher training programs, a few relevant literature reviews were done. They are listed below:

Khan et al. (2021) carried out a study to determine the impact of teacher education programs on the attitudes of aspiring educators towards the teaching profession. Result revealed that Compared to male respondents, female respondents saw a greater positive impact from teacher education programs. Odike & Nnaekwe (2018) found that some teachers have unethical behavior and their negative attitude towards the teaching professions was greatly caused for the bad perception of teaching profession among undergraduate learners. Ozdas (2018) study purpose was to identify pre-service teachers' perceptions regarding the teaching practice course. He found certain negative instances, such inadequate classroom management by instructors, a shortage of supplies, the unfavorable or negative attitudes and actions of the school administration.

Senol & Akda (2018) found that the attitudes of aspiring teachers towards uncertainty were shown to have a moderately unfavorable and significant relationship with their motivation to teach, and it was found that these views significantly predicted the motivation to teach. Dhull & Jain (2017) found that compared to male instructors, female teachers were shown to have a more positive attitude towards teaching. Higher job satisfaction among secondary

school teachers was associated with a more positive teaching attitude compared to lower job satisfaction among senior secondary school educators. Koross (2016) conducted a study on how students' experiences have affected their opinions of the teaching profession and evaluates the difficulties they face while doing their practicum in schools. The findings revealed that students' experiences influenced how they perceived the teaching profession and that learners face with challenges in their actual instructional exercise.

Bichi & Musa (2015) found that future teachers have favorable attitude towards teaching profession. Likewise, a meaningful disparity in gender was noted in their attitude towards the teaching profession. A study of student teachers' attitudes towards the teaching profession was done in 2014 by Bhargava & Pathy. The study revealed that the instructor can make the classroom a suitable, learner-friendly environment in the classroom with the support of a good attitude.

After reviewing the aforesaid related literatures, it is undeniably true that somehow a favorable positive attitude and perception towards Teaching Profession programs play a crucial role for teachers' proficiency and quality of teacher education. Reviews also revealed that the unfavorable or negative attitudes and behaviors was greatly impacted on the overall professional teacher education programs. Likewise, a significant difference in gender was observed in their perception and attitude towards the teaching profession. Furthermore, no research has been found that focusses on the current study. Once again, the population and sample of this study are different from those of the other studies.

Objectives of the study

1. To study about the perception and attitude level of prospective teachers towards professional teachers training programme of India.
2. To compare the perception and attitude level of male and female prospective teachers towards professional teachers training programme.
3. To compare the perception and attitude level of trained and untrained prospective teachers towards professional teachers training programme.
4. To explore the relationship between male and female prospective teachers' perception and attitude level towards professional teachers training programme.
5. To explore the relationship between trained and untrained prospective teachers' perception and attitude level towards professional teachers training programme.

Hypothesis of the Study

$H_0$1: There is no significant difference between the perception and attitude level of male and female prospective teachers towards professional teachers training programme.

$H_0$2: There is no significant difference between the perception and attitude level of trained and untrained prospective teachers towards professional teachers training programme.

$H_0$3: There is no significant difference between the relationship of male and female prospective teachers' perception and attitude level towards professional teachers training programme.

$H_0$4: There is no significant difference between the relationship of trained and untrained prospective teachers' perception and attitude level towards professional teachers training programme.

Significance of the Study

There may be value in this study in understanding teachers' perception and attitude towards 21st century professional teachers training programme of India in the light of NEP-2020. This study will help stakeholders can bring attitudinal change towards the professional teachers training programme. Teaching is a dynamic activity that requires for certain specialized competencies from its practitioners as well as favorable attitude. A teacher's competence is based on her approach towards her work. This study can provide for comparing prospective teachers' perspectives and attitudes towards professional teachers training programme of India in various circumstances, in order to gain a greater knowledge of the complex elements influencing teacher training and student outcomes. This study also can identify gaps in recent teacher training programs and areas where future teacher needs more support, which can assist teachers to develop focused interventions to close these gaps and raise their teaching effectiveness. The findings of this research study may help administrators and policy creator in the field of teacher education, understand how important it is to give teachers proper professional development.

Scope and Limitation of the Study

This research content mainly highlights on analyzing teachers' perception and attitude towards 21st century professional teachers training programme to the research area. The specific study fields are government and private sectors prospective teachers' belongings to

different category teacher training institutions across 11 states of India. Accordingly, the study's analysis and conclusions are specific and unique to the teacher education research field. As a result, the results of this study might not represent or correspond to other countries' prospective teachers and institutions. Thus, because of the scope and the findings of the study are restricted to Indian region only. In terms of methodology, both qualitative and quantitative methods were employed in this research. to examine the information gathered. The research area has been chosen because of the research gap of this area and needs of the 21st century teacher education fields and as well as current consciousness of the researcher about teacher training programs, continuous professional development (CPD), pre-service and in-service teacher training programme etc. The study made several recommendations among others, that future research should be conducted to investigate the factors responsible for the favorable or unfavorable perception and attitude of prospective teachers towards professional teachers training programme.

Research Methodology and Design

In order to accomplish the goals of this investigation, a descriptive survey method Design was adopted. This study mainly in both qualitative and quantitative in nature.

Data Type and sources

The study made use of both qualitative and quantitative data. Basically, primary data sources were used in this study to collect first-hand knowledge in order to meet the goals of the investigation. The core data came from information provided by respondents to an online survey questionnaire.

Population for the study

All the Government and Private teacher training institutions sectors prospective teachers belongs to different fields of teacher education across the 11 states teacher education institutions of India were considered as the population.

Sample for the Study

In order to ascertain the findings of the concerned problem, 71 prospective teachers belong to different types of Government and Private teachers training institutions across the 11 states of India were chosen randomly as a sample by stratified random sampling.

Tools used

- To investigate the perception and attitude of prospective teacher towards professional training, a self-made five (5) point Likert scale has been developed, named ''Scale to identify Perception and Attitude towards Professional Teachers Training Programme'' (SIPAPTTP).
- The scale was standardized by using DI (Discrimination index) analysis or Item discrimination analysis and checking the reliability coefficient of 0.681 by Cronbach's alpha. This scale consists 18 items with five responses. i. e. Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Neutral (N), Disagree (D), Strongly Disagree (SD). The points for the chosen positive responses are assigned as, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1. Vice versa the points for the chosen negative responses are assigned as, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 respectively.

Demographic Variable of the Study

For the requirement of the present research following demographic variables were adopted.

- State
- Gender (Male & Female)
- Professional Status (Trained & Untrained)
- Location of the Institute (Rural & Urban)
- Types of the Institute (Private & Government)
- Educational Level (Primary, Secondary & College-University)
- Subject Discipline (Language, Social Science & Science)

Here elaborately discusses the distribution of different demographic variables with proper statistical analysis. For the requirement of present research objectives researcher have been taken two demographic variables i.e. Gender (Male & Female) and Professional status (Trained & Untrained). These two variables are chosen according to the demands and research gap of the current scenario in the fields of teacher education.

Table-1 State wise Sample Distribution in India

S. No	State Name	Percentage	Sample Size
1	Jharkhand	42.3%	30
2	West Bengal	8.46%	6

3	Odisha	7.05%	5
4	Madhya Pradesh	8.46%	6
5	Assam	2.82%	2
6	Chhattisgarh	2.82%	2
7	Delhi	2.82%	2
8	Punjab	12.69%	9
9	Uttar Pradesh	2.82%	2
10	Haryana	2.82%	2
11	Bihar	7.05%	5
Total		**100%**	**71**

From the above Table-1, it can be seen that total 11 states of India were chosen for the present study as a demographic category of the population. Where Jharkhand state holding maximum samples (30) and Assam (2), Chhattisgarh (2), Delhi (2), Uttar Pradesh (2) Haryana (2) holding minimum samples for the study.

In this study researcher have divided the total sample (71) into two categories, i.e. Male and Female. Female respondents (40) are more than the Male respondents (31) as a gender wise distribution of the samples. The professional status of prospective teachers was divided in to two categories, i.e. Trained Teacher (69.01%) and Untrained Teacher (30.99%).

Objectives Wise Data Analysis and Interpretation

Result and Discussion Pertaining to Objective 1

To investigate the perception and attitude level of prospective teachers towards professional training and its impact on students 'academic life, a self-made five (5) point scale was used, named 'SIPAPTTP'. This scale consists 18 items with five responses that measure the perception and attitude level. From the below Table-2, it was found that the Mean value of whole respondents scores was 76.10 and Mode value is 74.00 that means respondent given more positive answer towards perception and attitude scale. The lowest and highest values of this scale are 59 and 90 respectively that also shows positive responses are more than the negative responses.

Table-2 Descriptive Data Analysis of the Sample

Descriptive Statistic Value	**Min**	**Max**	**M**	**Md**	**Mo**	**SD**
	59.00	90.00	76.10	76.00	74.00	6.435

Data validation and Normalization

For this study researcher developed a scale named 'SIPAPTTP'. Before practically using this scale in the field, research at first standardized the items. In this study researcher have checking the validation and authentication of each 18 items through Item analysis or DI (Discrimination index) calculation. The item analysis (DI) results revealed that every 18 items DI value are lies between (0.3 to 1.0) or (30% to 100%) that's follow the DI rule which means these all 18 items are valid. DI rules said that if any items' DI value lies between (0.3 to 1.0) or (30% to 100%) then these items recognized as a valid and authentic item. In this study researcher was uses Skewness and Kurtosis analysis to check the data normality level, which are shown from the below Table-3. Here the Skewness value is (.072) and Kurtosis values is (.010), which also means all the data are normal according to the rule. For standardized the scale researcher also find out the reliability coefficient of (0.681) by Cronbach's alpha.

Table-3 Analysis of Normality, Reliability of the Sample

Skewness	Kurtosis	Reliability (Cronbach's alpha)
.072	.010	.681
Normal	Normal	Reliable

Perception and Attitude towards Professional Teachers Training Programme (SIPAPTTP) - Scale Items

For this study researcher was developed questionnaire having 18 items. These items are listed below-

1. Training is essential for an effective teaching.
2. Teachers need to take pride in their profession not withstanding what other people feel.
3. Teacher finds the teaching profession interesting only in the beginning.
4. Professional training makes me competent and helps me to become an attractive and effective teacher.
5. It is not possible for teachers to control the class without implementing corporal punishments to the student where needed.
6. Trained teachers always use different methods to deliver the content as compared to untrained teachers.

7. Trained teachers of my institute establish a very good rapport with students, parents, and their colleagues as compared to untrained teachers.
8. Trained teachers are more disciplined and organized as compared to untrained teachers.
9. There are plenty of challenges in the profession of teaching.
10. Teachers choose teaching as a profession because it's had fewer competitions than other professions.
11. It is the responsibility of teachers to equip themselves with the newest educational technology.
12. Teachers are not seen as role models by students nowadays.
13. Students are more disciplined in the trained teachers' classroom as compared to the untrained teachers' classroom.
14. Students always learn some competencies from trained teachers as compared to untrained teachers.
15. Professional training helps the teacher to identify various learning difficulties of the students.
16. Professionally trained teachers of my institute always encourage students to contribute their idea in the lecture and also allow them to give appropriate feedback.
17. Trained teachers are capable of assisting and guiding the students in choosing their career in a better way as compared to untrained teachers.
18. Trained teachers engage the students in co-curricular activities which are vital for all round development of students in a better way as compared to untrained teachers.

Result and Discussion Pertaining to Objective 2

An independent-samples t-test, mean and standard deviation was conducted to compare the perception and attitude scores of male and female teachers' which are mentioned in Table-4. First, assumptions of normality and Leven's test were checked. Both the assumptions are met. There is no significance difference in scores of Males (M= 74.58, SD = 6.50) and Females [M= 77.28, SD = 6.21; t (69) = -1.777, p= .080]. As p value is greater than 0.05 level of significance, so the null hypothesis is accepted. It can be interpreted from the outcome that there is no significance difference between the perception and attitude level of male and female prospective teachers towards professional teachers training programme. The result revealed that male and female both genders have showing equal perception and attitude towards professional teachers training programme. So, the category of gender is not a factor that can affects professional teachers training programme.

Table-4 Comparison of the mean scores of male and female Prospective Teachers' perception and attitude level towards Professional Teachers Training Programme

Variables	Male (N= 31)			Female (N= 40)			t-value	Remarks
Perception and Attitude Level (SIPAPTTP)	M	SD	Md	M	SD	Md	.080	$H_0$1 is not rejected at a 0.05 level
	74.58	6.50	75.00	77.28	6.21	76.00		

Result and Discussion Pertaining to Objective 3

An independent-samples t-test, mean and standard deviation was conducted to compare the perception and attitude scores of trained and untrained teachers' which are mentioned in Table-5. First, assumptions of normality and Leven's test were checked. Both the assumptions are met. There is no significance difference in scores of Trained (M= 76.76, SD = 6.405) and Untrained [M= 74.64, SD= 6.403; t (69) = -1.289, p= .202]. As p value is greater than 0.05 level of significance, so the null hypothesis is accepted. Based on the results, it may be concluded that no significant difference between the perception and attitude level of trained and untrained prospective teachers towards professional teachers training programme. The result revealed that trained and untrained both type of teachers has showing equal perception and attitude towards professional teachers training programme. So, the category of professional status (trained/untrained) is not a factor that can affects professional teachers training programme.

Table-5 Comparison of the mean scores of Trained and Untrained Prospective Teachers' Perception and Attitude level towards Professional teachers Training programme

Variables	Trained Teacher (N= 49)			Untrained Teacher (N= 22)			t- value	Remarks
Perception and Attitude Level (SIPAPTTP)	M	SD	Md	M	SD	Md	.202	$H_0$2 is accepted at a 0.05 level
	76.76	6.405	76.00	74.64	6.403	74.00		

Result and Discussion Pertaining to Objective 4

Table-6 Correlation between Perception & Attitude level of male and female Prospective Teachers towards Professional Teachers training Programme

Variables	Male (N= 31) & Female (N= 31) Scores	Remarks
Relationship Between Perception & Attitude Level of Male & Female Teachers	**Correlation value**	$H_0$3 is accepted Strong & Positive Relationship (Positively correlated)
	0.868448	

From the above Table-6, shows the correlation between Male and Female prospective teacher perception and attitude level towards professional teachers training programme. In this research for calculating the correlation, researcher have taken equal number of two groups i.e. Male (N= 31) & Female (N= 31). Their correlation was calculated by using co-efficient of correlation method. So, the result revealed that their correlation value is 0.868448 which means both male and female teacher perception and attitude level are highly and positively correlated because this correlation value is very nearer to 1. Hence the null hypothesis $H_0$3 is accepted. Thus, it is possible to state that both male and female prospective teacher have showing positive perception and attitude towards professional teachers training programme.

Result and Discussion Pertaining to Objective 5

Table-7 Correlation between Perception & Attitude level of Trained and Untrained Prospective Teacher towards professional teachers training programme

Variables	Trained (N= 22) & Untrained (N= 22) Teachers' Scores	Remarks
Relationship Between Perception & Attitude Level of Trained & Untrained Teacher	**Correlation Value**	$H_0$4 is accepted Strong & Positive Relationship (Positively correlated)
	0.808041	

From the above Table-7, shows the correlation between Trained and Untrained teachers' perception and attitude level towards professional teachers training programme. In this research for calculating the correlation, researcher have taken equal number of two groups i.e. Trained (N= 22) & Untrained Teachers' (N= 22). So, the result revealed that their correlation value is 0.808041 which means both Trained and Untrained Teachers' perception and attitude level are highly and positively correlated. Hence the null hypothesis $H_0$4 is accepted. As per the correlation value, it can be interpreted that Trained and Untrained Teachers have showing positive perception and attitude towards professional teachers training programme.

In summarization the overall results of this study show that both male and female and trained and untrained teachers have showing positive perception and attitude towards 21st century professional teachers training programme. In order to inspire future teachers and enthusiastic about the teaching profession, this study made a number of recommendations for teachers and as well as teacher education stakeholders.

Major Findings of the Study

1. An overall positive perception and attitude level among prospective teachers towards 21st century professional teachers training programme has been found.
2. Perception and attitude level between Male and Female prospective teachers towards 21st century professional teachers training programme doesn't differ significantly. Result shows that 'p' (.080) value is greater than 0.05 level of significance, so the null hypothesis is $H_0$1 accepted.
3. Perception and attitude level between Trained and Untrained prospective teachers towards 21st century professional teachers training programme also doesn't differ significantly. Result shows that 'p' (.202) value is greater than 0.05 level of significance, so the null hypothesis $H_0$2 is accepted.
4. The correlation value between the perception and attitude level of male and female prospective teachers is (0.868448) which means both male and female prospective teachers' perception and attitude level are highly and positively correlated. Hence the null hypothesis $H_0$3 is accepted. It was established that both genders types of teachers have High level of 'SIPAPTTP'.
5. The other correlation value between the perception and attitude level of trained and untrained prospective teachers is (0.808041) which means both trained and untrained prospective teachers' perception and attitude level are highly and positively correlated.

Hence the null hypothesis $H_0$4 is accepted. It was established that both category teachers have High level of 'SIPAPTTP'.

Recommendations and Suggestions

Drawing conclusions from the study findings, the researcher has suggested for following recommendation to the stakeholders of the teacher education programs to improve teacher training programme.

1. Recognizing teachers as the cornerstone of the education system, the NPE-2020 recommended substantial reforms in teacher education. This included upgrading teacher training programs, developing new teacher training institutions, and enhancing the status and working circumstances of teachers.
2. Identify and solves the gaps in teacher training programme, especially in areas like cultural diversity, language teaching, and special education.
3. Investigate the long-term effects of professional training on the attitudes, behaviors, of teachers and academic achievements of students by doing follow-up research.
4. To ensure that teacher training programme are relevant and effective, involve stakeholders, teacher educators, administrators, parents as well as community members in the design and implementation of teacher training programme.
5. A Bachelor of Education (B. Ed.) degree must be included per NEP 2020, bringing about a number of modifications to pre-service teacher education. These modifications include 2-year B.Ed. programs and integrated 4-year ITEP (Integrated Teacher Education Programme) programme.
6. Teachers must complete 50 hours of CPD (Continuous Professional Development) annually in a variety of modalities, such as in-person meetings, online courses, and other activities, as mandated by NEP-2020.
7. Regularly track the success of teacher training programme using feedback mechanisms and standardized assessments to identify areas that require improvement.
8. Prioritize teacher well-being by offering tools and assistance for stress reduction, preventing burnout, and raising mental health awareness.

By implementing these suggestions and recommendations into practice, educators may provide a nurturing environment that encourages the growth of professionals' development of aspiring teachers and ultimately enhances the academic life for students.

Conclusion

In this study, the research results show prospective teachers' perception and attitude towards 21st century professional teachers training programme are positive at a high degree. There are various reasons why this research is important. The perception and attitude of prospective teachers towards professional teachers training programme play a critical factor in deciding how training affects their methods of instruction and teaching practices and ultimately, on their student's academic life. The study reveals that a variety of factors, such as gender, professional status, past experiences, self-belief, life skills, self-efficacy, social support, learners' attitude and career aspirations, influence prospective teachers' attitude and views towards professional teachers training programme. The results of the research suggest that aspiring teachers who had a positive outlook on their professional development are more likely to be motivated to pursue lifelong learning and development, which can enhance their instructional strategies and help their students achieve better results. On other hand, aspiring teachers who had a negative attitude about undergoing professional teachers training programme could be less likely to pursue lifelong learning, which could make it more difficult for them to adjust to shifting learning environments and satisfy the varied demands of their students.

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ITEP: A Catalyst for Quality Teacher Preparation in India

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Abstract

The evolution of the Integrated Teacher Education Program and its advancement in our country are the exclusive topics of this review study. The Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP), the flagship curriculum of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, is a multidisciplinary, integrated four-year program designed to prepare professionally competent teachers. In order to improve clarity, this program provides a brief overview of the goals of education. In order to contextualize and create a conceptual framework for comprehending the Integrated Teacher Education Program (ITEP), special attention is given to the third National Education Policy (NEP 2020). The program list of ITEP at the secondary level, the distribution of ITEP units by stage, and the distribution of ITEP by area were tabulated to provide a clear explanation of the progress of ITEP. The four phases are distributed, tabulated, and described according to pertinent themes. The Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP) has a self-explanatory regional distribution throughout India that demonstrates its methodical implementation under NEP 2020. It emphasizes the program's nationwide breadth and equitable geographic representation. To conclude, a percentage analysis may estimate the annual growth of institutions that provide ITEP. Therefore, this will contribute to a wide range of national educational development. It is anticipated that the effective creation and execution of ITEP will improve the quality of teaching-learning in the teacher education system, which will benefit the Indian educational system. As a result, this will have a broad impact on the advancement of national education.

Keywords: *Teacher Education Program, National Education Policy, Stage Specification, Student-Teachers, and Education Commission*

Introduction

High-quality education is among the most important elements influencing a nation's progress. The primary implementers of the educational curriculum are teachers and their creative instruction. Creative instruction is impossible without competent educators, contributed by a perfect and quality education system. Batra et al. (2023) reported that "quality education has several aspects, such as learning resources, technology, peer support,

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qualifications, teaching methodology, co-curricular activities, teaching-learning resources, opinions of the stakeholders of education, performance awards, and appraisal toward education" (cited from Hammond, 2013). It is emphasized that learning resources, technology integration, peer support, teacher credentials, teaching approaches, extracurricular activities, teaching-learning resources, stakeholder perceptions, performance recognition, and appraisal procedures are all aspects of quality education. Thus, in teacher education, the qualities and the contemporary educational environment, teachers are expected to have a combination of great teaching abilities, flexibility, and a strong dedication to the development and well-being of their students. They should be skilled in using technology, creating inclusive classrooms, supporting students' social and emotional growth, and academic advancement. Bhagat et al. (2020) reported that "teacher education is meant to prepare student teachers who are not only efficient in the pedagogy of teaching but also develop lots of thinking, effort, innovation, and interest in enriched learning experiences." It equips them with cognition and multiple skills that lead them to a satisfactory life. In this regard, the implementation of the Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP) is advised by the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 in order to develop teacher qualities that are in line with the modern requirements of the Indian educational system. This program emphasizes a holistic and multidisciplinary approach to teacher education by integrating subject knowledge, integrated technology wherever required, pedagogy, professional skills, values, and diverse disciplinary perspectives. Shanmugapriya et al. (2024) reported that a holistic and multidisciplinary approach to education enhances research and innovation capacities in learners while fostering the integrated development of cognitive, aesthetic, social, intellectual, physical, and moral skills that are all aligned with the required system. Anjoo (2025) considers that incorporating holistic and multidisciplinary education in teacher training programs ensures educators are equipped with innovative teaching strategies and inclusive pedagogical methods. Considering all these variables, this paper reviews the evolution of the integrated teacher education program and its objectives, highlights how holistic and multidisciplinary training frameworks support teachers' professional competence, promote innovative instructional practices, and endorse inclusive and learner-centered pedagogies aligned with modern technological needs. The proposal behind developing the "Teacher Education" Program in our nation is then further explained. It also looks at the gradual implementation of the Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP) in different Indian institutions and describes its annual progress. This study encompasses teacher education programs, ITEP,

and their motivation, highlighting a shift to a holistic, multidisciplinary, practice-oriented teacher preparation model. The discussion emphasizes ITEP's role in bridging gaps in teacher education by aligning training with national reforms, fostering innovative pedagogical skills, and preparing educators for diverse learner needs in an inclusive educational landscape.

National Education Policies

The National Education Policy (NEP-2020) is a wide-ranging support intended to reform our country's education system, thus replacing the previous policy from 1986. It emphasizes holistic, flexible, and multidisciplinary education to prepare learners for this century. Such was the third policy implemented after independence; initially, the Kothari Commission (1964–1966), officially known as the Education Commission, played a foundational role in shaping it. By concentrating on raising the caliber and training of educators, this commission sought to transform India's teacher education system. The National Policy on Education, 1968 (accessed on June 30, 2025), states that the Government of India formulated and adopted another National Policy on Education based on the recommendations of the Kothari Commission, to restructure the education system and strengthen teacher education to meet national developmental goals, and it can be modified in due time when necessary to make advancements and oversee education in India. The policy encompasses India's rural and urban primary and secondary education. The Kothari Commission's (1964–1966) recommendations, findings, and suggestions were heavily incorporated into the Government of India's first National Policy on Education, which was implemented in 1968. The elimination of educational inequalities and the equality of educational possibilities, especially for women and other underprivileged groups in India, were the main goals of the 1986 introduction of a revised National Policy on Education. In order to reinforce its implementation structure, this policy was further updated in 1992 to strengthen its implementation framework and was later revised again in 2005 during the tenure of Prime Minister Shri Manmohan Singh to address emerging educational challenges and align the policy with contemporary national and global developments. The present government of India has put forth NEP-2020, which will be the vision of this article.

The most recent NEP, which was enacted in 2020, aims to transform the educational system by strongly emphasizing equity, worth, and accessibility at all levels. Making teaching a respected and empowered profession that ensures all children have the right to access high-quality education and provides interdisciplinary and holistic education is the primary goal

of “NEP 2020" in teacher education. Therefore, the strategy seeks to revolutionize teacher education by improving their abilities, encouraging interdisciplinary and holistic learning, and creating a nurturing atmosphere. Ultimately, NEP 2020 views educators as nation-builders who will play a pivotal role in determining the destiny of India's educational system and its populace.

Methodology

Policy studies are the methodology used to catalyze this research article. This policy study investigates the formulations, application, effects, and assessment of educational policy at the local, national, and global levels. This field of study examines how political, social, economic, and cultural factors impact educational systems, institutions, instructional strategies, and student results. The analysis uses a variety of secondary sources, such as National Education Policy documents, data from the NCTE dashboard, the curriculum framework for the Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP) submitted to the Ministry of Education (MoE), and pertinent peer-reviewed journal literature, for this policy study.

Goals Focused

From the perspective of NEP-2020, transforming the teaching profession into one that is highly regarded and empowered to provide all children with a high-quality and holistic education is the main objective in teacher education. The other entails luring and keeping the top talent, allowing them professional growth, and training to be rendered in the program. Thus, a move toward an integrated 4-year B.Ed. Programs, a greater emphasis on real-world experience, a scrappy approach (a flexible, practical, and resource-efficient approach) to professional development, and the incorporation of technology and the Indian Knowledge System are just a few of the major educational changes that purely concentrate on teacher education by NEP 2020. The policy also emphasizes a multidisciplinary approach, learner-centric methodologies, and moving from “rote learning” to “critical thinking and problem-solving.” Madhabi (2024) reported that “the recommendation of NEP 2020 on teacher education curriculum is that the 4-year integrated B.Ed. offered by such multidisciplinary HEIs will, by 2030, become the minimal degree qualification for school teachers, and it possesses a dual-major holistic bachelor’s degree in education.” Thus, the Integrated Teacher Education Program has evolved in four domains. Harihara et al. (2024) highlight the outstanding features of the Integrated Program in Teacher Education, which

involves a holistic dual-major undergraduate degree offering an integrated education program (BA/B.Sc. and B.Com./B.Ed.), one of the primary mandates connected with the Teacher Education Program. Thus, the ITEP will equip instructors for all four phases of the new school structure: foundational, preparatory, middle, and secondary stages. In focusing on maintaining India's teacher education at an international standard, Shambhavi (2024) observed from the report of Korthagen et al. in 2006 that "effective practices from other countries inspire the NEP 2020's proposed teacher education reforms." For example, the emphasis on multidisciplinary teacher education institutes and stronger practical training aligns with approaches in countries like Australia, Canada, and the Netherlands. The regulatory system will be able to take severe action against insufficient and dysfunctional teacher education once the infractions have been corrected. By 2030, only multimodal, integrative programs that adhere to recognized standards of educational competency and quality will be available for teacher education.

NEP 2020 indicated in 5.29 that "to restore the integrity of the teacher education system completely, strict action will be taken against substandard stand-alone Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs) operating in the country, including their closure if necessary." Also in 15.4, as teacher education requires multidisciplinary inputs and education in high-quality content and pedagogy, all teacher education programs must be conducted within the institute's seams with a composite multidisciplinary educational stream in nature. Nazneen et al. (2023) revealed in redesigning teacher education in India that "teachers must work hard and help students to comprehend their goals to achieve the true goal of NEP."

Evolution of Integrated Teacher Education Program

The National Education Policy-2020 reveals the "Integrated Teacher Education Program" as a significant change in teacher education. Combining subject-matter expertise with undergraduate-level teaching seeks to improve the caliber of educators, especially at the secondary level (B.A. B.Ed. & B.Sc. B.Ed. & B.Com. B.Ed.) is among the dual-major undergraduate degree choices offered by the four-year ITEP program in four domains: the foundational stage, the preparatory stage, the middle stage, and the secondary stage. To simplify and improve teacher preparation, the Integrated Teacher Education Program replaced the five-year program with a four-year course that combined undergraduate and B.Ed. programs. According to the National Education Policy 2020, this conversion challenge will improve the effectiveness and efficiency of teacher preparation. In this case, the learner essentially studied the professional degree (teacher education) in an integrated

mode and the academic degree that provided subject knowledge. To address the issues above, Garima and Achill (2023) reported that "the National Council for Teacher Education has commenced the Integrated Teacher Education Programme at fifty-seven teacher education institutions across the country, beginning with the academic session 2023-24." ITEP, as proclaimed on October 26, 2021, is a four-year dual-major comprehensive undergraduate degree program that offers a Bachelor of Arts and Science degree with a B.Ed. ITEP shows ITEP's original chronology, which follows. The Gazette Notice on ITEP Norms and Standards was published in October 2021. Forty-two central and state institutions were recognized for piloting ITEP in March 2023. Five committees were established to create and design the curriculum framework and course content. In May 2023, online applications were invited for the second phase of the ITEP pilot. In the same month, a consultative meeting was held with forty-two institutions regarding the centralized admissions process, such as the model curriculum framework and syllabi, document sharing, the roadmap, related regulations, etc. These may be some of the steps NCTE has taken. In July 2023, the core committee finalized the ITEP curriculum framework, which was then approved by the general body and submitted to the MoE for approval. Various committees then finalized the ITEP syllabi.

Table-1 Academic Year-Wise Programme List of ITEP at Secondary Stage

S. No.	Academic Year	IITs	NITs	CU	SU	C/I	Total
1	2023-2024	2	5	13	11	11	42
2	2024-2025	1	2	6	10	3	22
	In Aggregate	3	7	19	21	14	64

Thus, Table 1 indicates the ITEP data started by a range of Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs), National Institutes of Technology (NITs), Central Universities, State Universities, and Institutes/Colleges in the consecutive academic years. Overall, 42 and 22 institutions started ITEP in the academic years 2023-2024 and 2024-2025, respectively. On comparing these data, 22 institutions will be added by the year 2025, and therefore, the increase rate of ITEP-providing institutions in percentage is 52.38. NTA (2025) hereby informs all applicants who took the National Common Entrance Test (NCET) 2025, that the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) has approved a list of 77 central and state universities/institutions, including IITs, NITs, RIEs, and other government colleges, that are eligible to admit learners to the four-year Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP) for the academic session 2025–2026. It is observed that 13 institutes have been approved

for ITEP, and the NTA recently announced it. Here it is revealed that the increased percentage of ITEP course institutions in the academic year 2025-2026 is 20.31.

Stage Specification in ITEP

Stage-specific specialization is a component of ITEP that educates teachers for the foundational, preparatory, middle, and secondary school stages. Such guarantees that educators possess the abilities, dispositions, and knowledge required for successful instruction at their selected level. The Foundational Stage in the Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP) focuses on educating and preparing teachers for preschool and Grades 1 and 2. This stage emphasizes a flexible, play/activity-based, and inquiry-based learning approach, focusing on holistic child development.

The Integrated Teacher Education Program (ITEP) preparatory stage focuses on grades 3 to 5. This stage aims to build a strong foundation for future learning by shifting from play-based pedagogies to more structured learning while maintaining an engaging and fun environment.

The middle stage in the Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP) prepares teachers for Grades 6, 7, and 8. It builds upon the preparatory stage by introducing more specialized subjects and subject teachers while emphasizing experiential learning and interdisciplinary connections.

The secondary stage of the Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP) spans Grades 9 to 12. It focuses on preparing teachers for this crucial transition phase in a student's academic journey, emphasizing holistic development and a wide range of subject choices. This stage builds on the middle school approach, but it is more thorough, incorporates critical thinking, and pays more attention to the goals of the pupils. Thus, the stage-wise distribution of ITEP is tabulated below.

Table 2 indicates that, as an aggregate of 142 units, ITEP programs in the foundational stage have 1 unit, in the preparatory and middle stages hold seven units, and the secondary stage consists of 127 units. On course-wise data, there are 73 units in BA B Ed, 53 in B Sc B Ed, and 16 in B Com B Ed. The diagrammatic representation of the data gives a clear picture of the discussion in Figure 1.

Table-2 Stage-wise Distribution of ITEP Units

S. No.	Stage	Units			Total
		B.A. B.Ed.	B.Sc. B.Ed.	B. Com. B. Ed.	
1	Foundational Stage	1	0	0	1
2	Preparatory Stage	3	3	1	7
3	Middle Stage	6	1	0	7
4	Secondary Stage	63	49	15	127
Total		73	53	16	142
Note: One unit equals 50 intakes.					

Source: ITEP Dashboard https://ncte.gov.in/website/ITEP/ITEPJourney.aspx

A crucial part of NEP 2020 is that ITEP offers a dual-major bachelor's degree that combines pedagogical instruction and subject knowledge to revolutionize teacher education. India is organized into four regions by the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE): Northern, Southern, Eastern, and Western. Each region is administered by a regional committee that is in charge of overseeing, supporting, and regulating teacher education programs within this national framework.

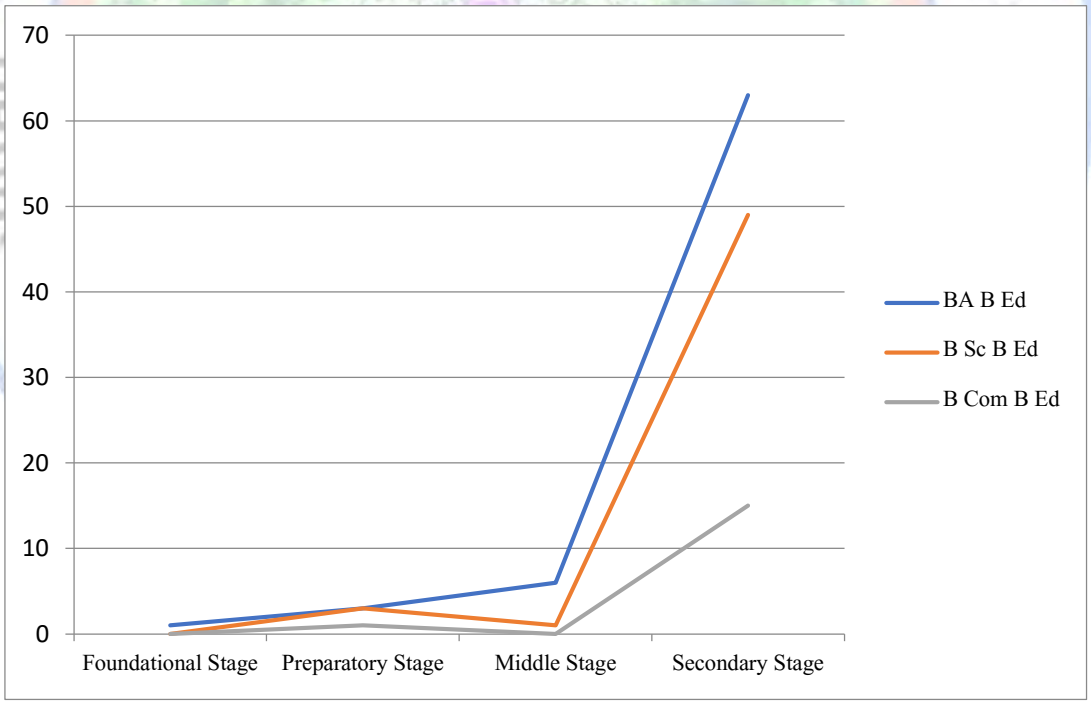


Fig. 1 Stage-wise Distribution of ITEP Units

As Table 3 indicates, the regional distribution of ITEP is as follows.

Table-3 Regional Representation of ITEP Units

S. No.	Region	Units			Total
		B.A. B.Ed.	B.Sc. B.Ed.	B. Com. B. Ed.	
1	Northern Regional Centre (NRC)	18	11	7	36
2	Western Regional Centre (WRC)	7	6	2	15
3	Eastern Regional Centre (ERC)	5	6	0	11
4	Southern Regional Centre (SRC)	43	30	7	80
Total		73	53	16	142

Source: ITEP Dashboard https://ncte.gov.in/website/ITEP/ITEPJourney.aspx

Up until the 2024–2025 academic year, the Southern Regional Centre has 80 ITEP units, the Northern Regional Centre has 36, the Western Regional Centre has 15, and the Eastern Regional Centre has 11 units (B.A., B.Sc., B.Com., and B.Com. B. Ed.). By acting as a liaison between regional institutions and the central body (NCTE), these regional splits facilitate efficient coordination and information sharing. The regional committees are in a position to modify the program's execution under regional specificities by acknowledging that various areas may have distinct demands and difficulties. Thus, Figure 2 supports the region-wide distribution of ITEP units in graphical form.

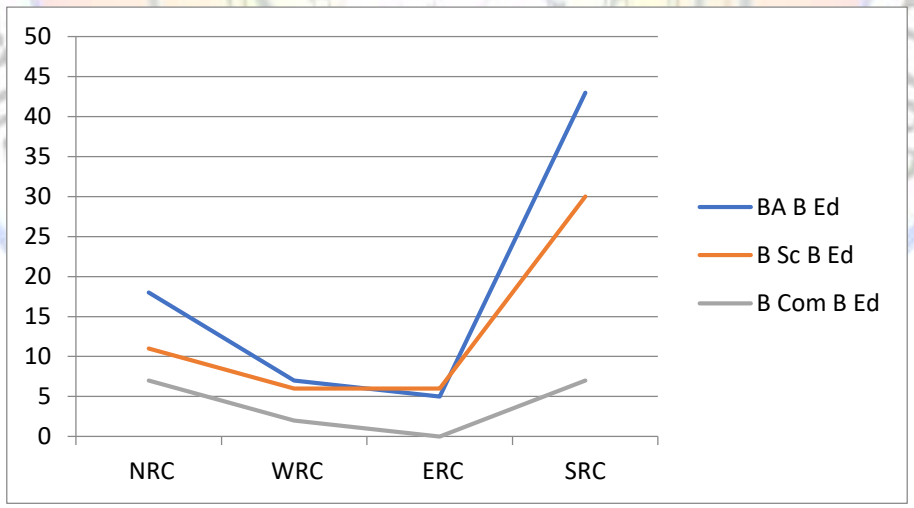


Fig. 2 Region-wise Distribution of ITEP Units

Prominent in the Program

Some highlighted features of this program are discussed below. *Centralized Admission Process (CAP):* To enroll in ITEP, students must take the National Common Entrance Test

(NCET), which is overseen by the National Testing Agency and is a requirement for the CAP. *Enhancement in Diverse Culture*: By allowing ITEP to work with students from all over India, the CAP admissions process promotes awareness and respect for the students' varied origins (NEP 2020, NTA, 2023). *Pathway to Two Research Programs*: Under NEP-2020, students enrolled in four-year integrated courses can pursue Ph.D. programs in education or related fields immediately without obtaining master's degrees (NEP, 2020; UCC2022). *Minimum Teacher Qualification:* By 2030, NEP-2020 seeks to make the ITEP a prerequisite for educators working in the foundational, preparatory, middle, and secondary school levels. *Extended Time:* Student-teachers who cannot finish the semester will be allowed to finish the program within six years of entrance, guaranteeing a longer time for their study. *Create Teachers with Proficiency:* Besides encouraging social interaction, ITEP equips learners with abilities such as problem-solving skills, communication skills, and critical thinking skills with moral and ethical reasoning. *Multiple Entry, Exit, and Re-Entry:* A multiple entry, exit, and re-entry structure is incorporated into the ITEP program, allowing student-teachers to halt and resume their studies with the proper academic recognition. Learners receive a certificate after one year, a diploma after two years, a bachelor's degree after three years, and a four-year dual-major undergraduate degree with B.Ed. upon full program completion, depending on the length of successful completion and minimum credit requirements. Accessibility, learner mobility, and chances for lifelong learning are all improved by this adaptable structure. In keeping with NEP 2020's mission, this evaluation offers a thorough overview of ITEP as a revolutionary program designed to improve the caliber, efficacy, and inclusivity of teacher education in India. As per the Ministry of Education (2023), the Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP) has not yet been regularized as the only required teacher education program in the country; instead, it is currently being implemented in a staged and trial fashion across a few central and state institutions with NCTE permission.

Conclusion

An important shift in India's teacher training system, represented by the National Education Policy 2020's goal for the Integrated Teacher Education Program, represents a significant change in India's teacher training system. The program seeks to create well-rounded, flexible, and successful teachers who are prepared to address the changing requirements of students by fusing academic knowledge, pedagogical expertise, and real-world experience. This curriculum addresses the shortcomings of conventional teacher preparation methods

by providing a more comprehensive and interdisciplinary approach. The capacity of ITEP to create a flexible and dynamic educational system that can empower future generations will determine its success. Thus, the successful implementation of ITEP will be instrumental **in** shaping the future education system in our country. It has the potential to significantly improve the excellence of teaching and learning, ultimately contributing to the nation's development. However, ongoing evaluation and adaptation will be crucial to ensure the program effectively addresses the developing needs of the education sector and the learners' diverse needs. The effective implementation of ITEP will significantly shape the future of education in India. It may greatly raise the standard of instruction and learning, ultimately aiding the country's advancement. Continuous assessment and modification will be essential to guarantee that the program successfully meets the various requirements of students and the changing demands of the education sector.

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Transforming Ostracism to Neuro-Inclusion: Building Supportive Educational Environments for Autistic Students

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Abstract

In the traditional educational setting autistic students frequently struggle with the determined exclusion and social isolation by their peers and other stakeholders of education due to a lack of understanding and inclusive practices. This paper explores the transformation from ostracism to neuro-inclusion, by emphasizing the need of developing an inclusive and supportive educational environment that helps to acknowledge and celebrate the neurodiversity among the students. This research article critically examines that how often the autistic students experience deliberated ignorance (ostracism) from their peers. It also introduces the idea of neuro-inclusion as a new approach that respects neurodivergent identities and encourages fair and equitable participation of them. Also, an analysis of signs and symptoms associated with ASD, helps in the identification of key barriers to inclusion rooted in the current educational practices. Further investigation reveals the fundamental reasons of ostracism, including societal stigma and institutional bias. Finally, there is a vision put forward for an educational future that is more open and understanding to greater diversity and where diversity is a strength rather than a deficit. As a result, it highlights the critical and immediate need for policy and practice to address this to ensure the inclusion for all the learners, whatever their neurotype.

Keywords: *Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Neuro-inclusion, Ostracism, Neurodiversity, Supportive Learning Environments.*

Introduction

The 21st Century is referred to the "century of the technology, innovation and creation", due to the integration of artificial intelligence (AI), digital communication, biotechnology and quantum computing, fundamentally transforming the way of living, work and social interactions with the world around us. As a result of these advancements every individual

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have different experiences and have varying ways of thinking, different skills and unique competencies in areas such as mental, psychological, emotional functioning, social interaction and spirituality and also the speed of doing task is varies to every individual. Autism is the one of the disorders in which individual vastly varies in managing time in doing task. Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD, termed autism in this article) is a neuro developmental condition characterized by deficits in social communication and interaction, as well as repetitive behaviour and restricted interests (American Psychiatric Association (APA), 2013; Bhatara, A., Babikian, T., Laugeson, E. et al., 2013). The people with ASD may face difficulty in interacting with others, understanding and following directions, show repetitive behavior, restrictive thinking, and unable to follow diverse routines. They also have difficulties in making maintaining eye contact, understanding emotions, have learning disabilities, and different sensory sensitivities.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2020), one in 36 children is diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder, which has considerably increased twenty to thirty times as compared to 40-50 years ago (as cited in Doda et al., 2024; Zhu et al., 2025). The prevalence of ASD is determined to range from 0.02% to 3.66% of the population at global level (Alrehaili et at., 2023). Bougeard et al., 2021 & Dietz et al., 2020 studied the different prevalence rates, with ASD affecting approximately 0.38% to 3.13% of the European population, 0.11% to 1.53% in the Middle-East, 0.08% to 9.3% in Asia, 0.87% to 2.21% in North America, around 1% in Africa, and 1.7% in Australia (Ostrowski et al., 2024). In Europe, the maximum incidence of ASD is found in Sweden (115/10000). In Poland, the average is calculated at 35/10000 children and is approximately 4 times higher in men (Ostrowski et al., 2024). Zeidan et al., (2022) revealed that autism coexists with intellectual disability in approximately 33% of cases. Lugo-Marin et al. (2019) as cited in Ostrowski et al., (2024), found that attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is being the most prevalent among mental disorders with autism.

Categorization of Autism

In the United States, to diagnose mental disorders the medical professionals typically utilize the Fifth Edition (DSM-5) of Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (Understanding Insanity vs. Mental Illness: Key Differences And, 2020). The DSM, which is currently in its fifth version, has undergone changes over time. The DSM-5 was released in 2013 and redefined autism. Autism spectrum disorder is the only classification for autism in the current edition of the DSM (Behavioral Innovations, 2023). There are no

subcategories. Instead of separate diagnoses, DSM-5 categorizes autism by severity levels based on the level of support needed as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Levels of Autism as per DSM-5

Severity Level	Description	Comparison with DSM-4
Level 1 ("Requiring Support")	Mild autism with some difficulty in social interactions and inflexible behaviour but can function with minimal support.	Comparable to Asperger's Syndrome or High-Functioning Autism.
Level 2 ("Requiring Substantial Support")	Moderate autism with more noticeable social and communication difficulties, along with restricted/repetitive behaviours, needs significant support.	Falls between moderate autism and PDD-NOS.
Level 3 ("Requiring Very Substantial Support")	Severe autism with major impairments in verbal and nonverbal communication, extreme difficulty in social interactions, and highly restrictive/repetitive behaviors, requires intensive support.	Comparable to classic/severe autism.

Adapted from Weitlauf, A. S., Gotham, K. O., Vehorn, A. C., & Warren, Z. E. , 2014.

This table highlights how the DSM-5 classification of autism spectrum disorder categorizes autism into three well defined severity levels based on the degree of support required by the individual. This approach shifts the focus from separate diagnostic labels used in DSM-4 to a unified spectrum that better reflects the wide range of functional abilities and challenges. Level 1 relates to the individuals who can function with minimal support despite mild social and behavioral difficulties, while Level 2 represents those who need substantial assistance due to more pronounced communication and behavioral issues. Level 3 includes individuals with severe impairments who need very substantial and continuous support. Overall, this severity-based framework promotes a more individualized understanding of autism and provides appropriate planning of interventions, support services, and educational strategies.

Factors of Autism

Available scientific evidence suggests that there are probably many factors that make a child more likely to have autism, including environmental and genetic factors.

Ostracism

In the era of inclusive education environment still many students face the problem of ostracism. Ostracism refers to the act of intentionally or deliberately excluding, ignoring, neglecting a person by their peers, relatives, or say by other individuals. "Being excluded or ostracized is an invisible form of bullying that doesn't leave bruises, and therefore we often underestimate its impact," (Kipling D. Williams, 2011, as cited in Purdue University, 2011). The act of purposefully excluding or neglecting a pupil by their peers or perhaps even teachers is referred to as "ostracism" in the context of education. This basically makes the student feel isolated socially and out of place. Ostracism in educational settings can have significant negative impacts on students' psychological well-being and academic engagement. Twyman et al. (2010) found that autistic children are eight times more likely to experience ostracism by being ignored and treated as they do not exist – than their TD peers.

Neuro-inclusion

Neuro-inclusion is a positive approach that accepts neurological differences and actively creates well organized social, emotional and physical environments where all people, including neurodivergent individuals, feel respected, supported and encouraged. This approach requires inclusive education for ASD children where they can be the part of main stream education. Inclusive education instead calls for adapting schools upfront to the needs and strengths of diverse students so that all students can feel valued and respected in schools, develop their full potential, and feel a true sense of belonging (Conseil supérieur de l'éducation, 2017; UNESCO, 2020 cited in La Trobe University, 2024). Neuro-Inclusion acknowledges the diversity of brain types i.e. neurodiversity, which makes it possible for people to think, feel, process, function executively, connect with others, and communicate in a wide range of ways. Neuro-inclusion is a term that refers to creating environments, practices and processes that ar e inclusive of all people's cognitive processing requirements (Dark, 2024). Neuro-inclusion is also the act of listening to and valuing the views and support requirements of people whose thinking and behaviour significantly diverge from prominent expressions (Dark, 2024).

Signs and Symptoms of Children with ASD

Autism spectrum disorder symptoms are usually classified into two categories:

1. Difficulties with social communication and interaction. These affect how your child socializes.

2. Restricted and repetitive behaviours, interests or activities. These affect how your child acts. The various studies on Autistic students done by Cleveland Clinic, (2023); Sicherman et al., (2021) and Parmeggiani et al., (2019) highlighted some signs and symptoms of Children with ASD are shown in Fig.1.

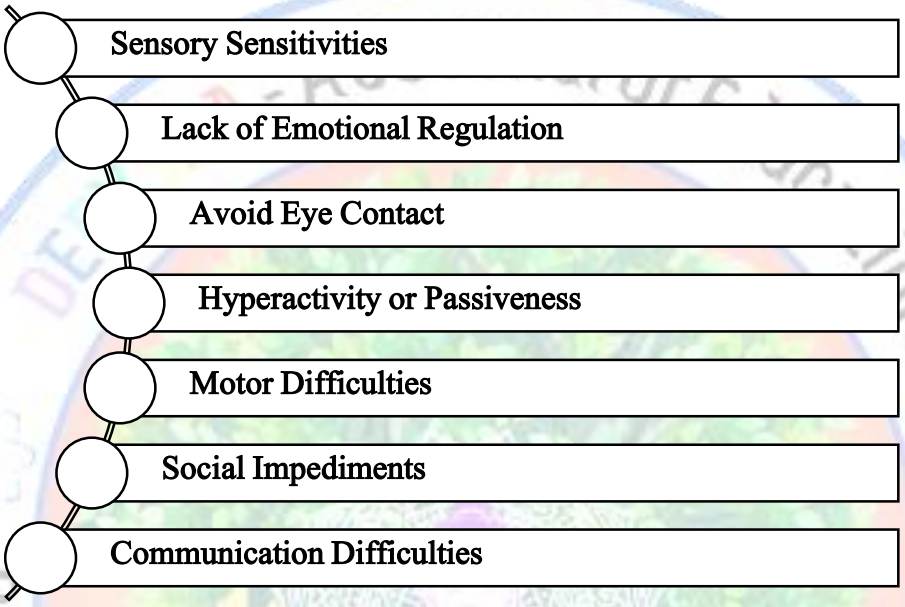


Fig.1 Signs and Symptoms of Children with ASD

The figure 1 presents the core signs and symptoms commonly observed in children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). These children have sensory sensitivities, deficits in emotional regulation, avoidance of eye contact, atypical activity levels (hyperactivity or passiveness), motor coordination difficulties, social impediments, and communication challenges. All these characteristics reflect pervasive difficulties in sensory processing, socio-emotional functioning, motor skills, and interpersonal communication. Also, according to Cleveland Clinic, (2023); Sicherman et al., (2021) and Parmeggiani et al., (2019) here are some other signs and symptoms of Children with ASD like Delayed language skills delayed movement skills, delayed cognitive or learning skills, hyperactive, impulsive, and/or inattentive behaviour, unusual mood or emotional reactions, Anxiety, stress, or excessive worry, lack of fear or more fear than expected.

Barriers to Neuro-inclusion of Autistic students in current Educational Environments

The inclusion of autistic students in educational environments faces several barriers that hinder their full participation and integration. These include intrinsic student factors, resource limitations, and school- or teacher-related issues (Stephenson et al., 2020). General education teachers often lack training, collaboration opportunities, and resources to support autistic students effectively (Al Jaffal, 2022). These barriers are multifaceted, involving attitudes, resources, training, and the physical and social environment of schools. The inadequate parental cooperation, lack of knowledge and information on ASD, lack of support and policy issues as well as lack of collaboration with other professionals as the major challenges affecting the inclusion of children with ASD (Eyram Juliet Senoo et al., 2024). Barriers to Neuro -Inclusion are:

- Attitudes and Training of the educators: It has been found that educators lack the necessary training and confidence needed to support autistic students effectively in traditional educational settings due to a lack of collaboration opportunities between general and special education teachers, which can help them to develop inclusive practices and habits in them (Ahlers et al., 2023; Jaffal, 2022; Cook, A., & Ogden, J., 2021).

- Limitation of Resources: Due to lack of resources like technology and additional support staff, to facilitate an inclusive environment, the schools fail to provide appropriate environment for autistic children. Therefore, the necessary interventions are not made possible for the autistic children (Jaffal, M., 2022; & Moura, B., 2024).

- Physical Infrastructure and Social Environment in schools: The physical infra facilities of schools, including the location of classrooms, can act as a barrier to inclusion as autistic children suffered due to improper facilities as per their need. Also, autistic students faced social challenges like as bullying, isolation, and anxiety, which happened due to a lack of understanding for autistics students' difficulties and lack of support from peers and staff (Ahlers et al., 2023; Humphrey, N., & Lewis, S. 2008; Bailey, J., & Baker, S., 2020; Horgan, F., Kenny, N., & Flynn, P., 2022).

- Policy and Implementation Gaps: It has been found that there is inclusive education policies exist, but it failed due to inconsistency in their implementation which can lead to learning environments that are not in the favour and supportive for autistic students. This is because schools may not fully hold or understand the principles of neurodiversity which would be helpful in bridging this implementation gap

(Humphrey, N., & Lewis, S. 2008; Carlotto, S. et al. 2022; Horgan, F., Kenny, N., & Flynn, P., 2022).

- Limited Student-Centric Approaches: Detzer, (2016) found that educational interventions only focus on behavioural challenges rather than the cognitive and sensory needs of autistic students. This oversight may result in a disconnect between the provided assistance and the genuine information sought by the learners (Detzer, 2016).

Understanding the Challenges: Why Ostracism Occurs with Autistic students

It has been found that students with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) are at higher risk of bullying by their peers, victimization, and ostracism compared to their other neurotypical peers (Twyman et al., 2010; Hong et al., 2015). Symes & Humphrey, (2010) found that autistic learners highly experienced a deliberated social exclusion, lower levels of peer acceptance, and higher levels of rejection in mainstream schools due to their symptoms and struggle of autism. The social inclusion of autistic students in educational settings is influenced by various factors as:

- Interactions and Support from Peers: Autistic students are rejected and bullying by their peers, and facing lower levels of peer acceptance and social support as compared to students' normal students (Symes & Humphrey, 2010; Mamas et al., 2021).

- Attitudes and Knowledge of Educator: The inclusion of autistic students negatively affected by the attitudes of their educators, including principals and special education teachers. If they have positive attitudes towards them and adequate knowledge about autism can facilitate better inclusion practices in educational settings (Ahlers et al., 2023; Humphrey & Symes, 2013; Cristina, 2024).

- Organization of School Environment: Inclusion of autistic students in mainstream schools is affected by the physical and organizational aspects of schools, like classroom location and school routines. School administration should well-prepared and to support the social and cognitive development of autistic students (Camargo & Givigi, 2021; Brede et al., 2017).

- Specific Difficulties due to Autism: Autistic students face unique and varying difficulties like problem in social interaction, communication, and sensory sensitivities, which leads to lack of their social participation in mainstream educational settings (Bailey & Baker, 2020; Mamas et al., 2021).

- Lack of Inclusive Practices: A culture of respect and understanding provides feeling of support and being valued to autism students. Brede et al., (2017) highlights that relationships between staff and students need to be strong and the staff should follow inclusive practices while understanding the specific needs of autistic students.

Strategies for Change: Fostering Neuro-inclusion

Neuro-Inclusion for autistic student can be foster using several strategies:

- Implementing the Eight Principles of Neuro-Inclusion: The eight principles named as Respect, Representation, Learn and Experiment, Remove Barriers, Inclusion of Participants, Actionable Outcomes, Language Choices, Dissemination, can be used in research and education, development of inclusive educational practices, underlining epistemic agency, participation, and utility in benefitting the autism community in a beneficial manner (Dark, 2024).
- Empowering Educator through Training and Professional Development: For better understanding about autistic students' educators should be empowered by providing them professional training and development programs. This professional training and program should include autism-specific understanding and strategies for changing the educational settings to better accommodate autistic students (Rajotte et al., 2022; Petersson-Bloom & Holmqvist, 2022).
- Integrating Curriculum with Neurodiversity into Learning: According to Detzer, (2016) Curriculum should be focused on needs of autistic students by identifying their unique cognitive and sensory traits, rather than only addressing their behavioural challenges. This includes creating learning environments that are flexible and inclusive, promoting neurodiversity and an ethics of inclusivity (Crompton et al., 2022).
- Promoting Peers Understanding and Acceptance: Peers are the key role player for better inclusiveness and reducing ostracism by providing autistic students an opportunity to interact comfortably and share strategies, ideas and feelings. This

culture should be developed by keeping flexibility and inclusivity in mind, fostering a positive school environment that embraces neurodiversity in mainstream educational settings (Crompton et al., 2022; Chen et al., 2021).

- Engaging Family for developing Home-School Partnerships: To support autistic students a strong partnership between school and home is highly needed. Lai et al., (2020), suggests that collaborative approaches of including a families can help maximize students' potential and minimize barriers faced by autistics students.

The Path Forward: Building a More Inclusive Future

For building a more inclusive future for autistic students addressing systemic support, exploring new research avenues, and embracing neurodiversity in education is required. It can be done through:

Policy Recommendations for Systemic Support

- Inclusive Frameworks: Policies should aim at creating inclusive educational frameworks that presume skill and ensure involvement in accommodation planning for autistic students. The development of effective communication systems and expected management are important for supporting autistic students in these educational settings (Kingsbury et al., 2020; Hersh & Elley, 2019).

- Professional Development of Educators: Autism-specific training for educators is essential and should provide timely to educators. This training should focus on better understanding about autism and implementing strategies to accommodate autistic students, thereby enhancing their inclusion in both social and educational contexts (Petersson-Bloom & Holmqvist, 2022; Hersh & Elley, 2019).

- Affirmative Neurodiversity Approaches: Policies for benefitting autistics students need to encourage neurodiversity-affirmative, community-based participatory research models. Bernard et al., (2023), also suggests that these approaches recognize the differing needs of marginalized groups and views the autistic community as a unit of identity, aligning it with a human rights perspective.

Research Directions for New Avenues

- More Autistic Perspectives in Research: Priorities in future research studies need to be the views and perspectives of the autistic students, especially the ones with facing

so much difficulties of autism. As suggested by Leadbitter et al., (2021); Dark, (2024) this includes developing tools and instruments to measure and assess the outcomes prioritized by autistic individuals.

- Intersectionality in Autism Research: By examining autistic identity development from an intersectional approach can also reveal important avenues of understanding how various marginalised identities intersect with autistic identity to offer a holistic understanding of autistic experiences (Botha & Gillespie-Lynch, 2022).

- Environmental Adaptations: Further research studies should attempt to address environmental adaptations to mitigate the sensory processing difficulties of autistic students, to promote their inclusion and participation in educational learning settings (Petersson-Bloom & Holmqvist, 2022).

A Call to Action for Embracing Neurodiversity in Education

- Cultural Shift in Educational Settings: It is recommended that educational institutions should hold a neurodiversity paradigm, which views autism as a difference rather than a deficit. Essentially, it acknowledges the strengths associated with autism while integrating them into the educational practices (Acevedo & Nusbaum, 2020; Fletcher-Watson, 2023).

- Empowering the Autistic Voices: It is important hear the voices of autistic individuals when discussing about their education and support. This leads to be more effective and inclusive educational practices that respect and value neurodiversity in educational settings (Kingsbury et al., 2020; Houting, 2019).

Conclusion

The exclusion of autistic students negatively affects their social, emotional, and academic growth, which leads to the critical need for inclusive practices. Transforming from a context of ostracism to neuro-inclusion focuses on the need for developing environments in which autistic students can be recognised, being respected and valued. Studies revealed that well organised inclusion programs, peer-mediation based interventions, and professional teacher training in social-emotional support can significantly reduce feelings of isolation and deliberately ignored, and enhance peer and teachers' relationships, and improve their engagement in mainstream educational settings. Cross-sectional research by Ji, (2025) also

suggests that attendance of autistic students in mainstream school settings is positively linked with children's social inclusion and sense of belonging, which results into better educational engagement and mental health outcomes of autistics students. By moving toward neuro-inclusion represents a transformative shift from marginalization to participation of autistics students, which enabling them to succeed academically, socially, and emotionally in their communities. It has been observed in longitudinal studies that children suffering with ASD and who receives early intervention are much more likely to be enrolled and retained in regular schools, and about 76.5% of such children with ASD stayed in schools for 2–7 years after intervention as compared to those ASD students who did not receive early support and intervention (Karanth & Chandhok, 2013). Inclusion of autistic students not only provides opportunities for academic participation but also enhances social integration and acceptance (Simón et al., 2023). To transform ostracism into neuro-inclusion requires a shift in mindset first of peers, teachers and all other stakeholders of education, shift in policies, and practices to create genuine supportive educational environments for autistic students for their better educational opportunities. As the first step toward understanding the unique needs of ASD students we should recognize its signs and symptoms. By promoting inclusion over exclusion that schools may be able to empower autistic students to reach their full strengths in field of academics, social life and their emotional fulfilment.

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A Systematic Review on Academic Anxiety among Students

Momin Sumaiya[1]

Abstract

This paper reviews some Indian as well as foreign research studies related to academic anxiety in students. Academic anxiety is considered as a major obstacle in the achievement, emotional well-being as well as overall development of students. To understand this phenomenon, the material has been collected from various educational databases, focusing on the relevant literature and research studies published in the last decade. The selected studies were categorized and then analyzed to reveal the causes and effects of academic anxiety in students and to identify the mechanisms of management of anxiety. The review found that exam pressure, parental expectations, fear of failure, comparison with peers, and school environment, etc. are the factors that cause anxiety in students, which also has an impact on the psychological and academic achievement of students, such as low self-esteem, low motivation, and poor academic performance. Various literature and research reviews show that academic anxiety cannot be completely prevented, but it can be controlled by using various effective methods. Few suggestive measures have also been given to manage anxiety effectively.

Keywords: Anxiety, Academic Anxiety, Students.

Introduction

Education aims at multifaceted development of student's personality. Teachers take different efforts for achieving the purpose. But, we observe that due to certain psychological issues, students' response and improvement is much less than expected. One such major psychological factor affecting students' academic performance and personal growth is anxiety. It often remains unnoticed or misunderstood in the educational setting, yet it plays a significant role in shaping students' behavior, motivation, and learning outcomes.

Anxiety, Academic Anxiety and the Students

The word "anxiety" is derived from the Latin word "angus" or "anxiety", which means "to suffocate" or "to be disturbed". This word refers to feelings of fear, nervousness or worry,

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which can sometimes be real and sometimes due to imagined situations. Just as one has his own personality, each person is subject to stress or anxiety in different ways according to his personality or depending on different situations. When we perceive any kind of danger or pressure around us, anxiety negatively affects the way we think, feel and act. In today's competitive world, people often feel anxious due to the pressure to succeed. Increasing responsibilities in the field of work and education affect their mental peace. Social expectations and the attempt to get ahead of others also put more pressure on them. All these factors together make a person constantly in a state of anxiety and worry.

The academic anxiety is a type of stress students experience in response to challenges within the educational setting. It arises from fear of exams, pressure from teachers, difficulty with specific subjects, or general discomfort in the academic environment. Students may feel anxious when they struggle to meet academic demands, face language barriers, unclear topics, poor study habits, or incomplete work. This anxiety reflects a student's internal response to perceived failure or pressure in school and can affect their overall academic performance and emotional well-being. Academic anxiety is something that almost every student face at some point during their educational journey. Whether it is the pressure or stress of completing assignments on time, or the nervousness or stress that comes with exams, or the fear and dread of not living up to the expectations of teachers and parents. Students often feel pressured by the expectations of others and their own high expectations. This pressure makes them overwhelmed by schoolwork and responsibilities. As a result, they become mentally exhausted and restless. In such a situation, students need balance and peace so that they can perform better. This type of anxiety also disrupts students' attention, memory, and confidence, making it very difficult for them to concentrate, study, or perform well in class. Sometimes, this anxiety becomes so dangerous that some students start doubting themselves and running away from completing schoolwork and sometimes even feeling sick. It is not right to consider student anxiety limited to the fear of exams. This condition is also related to how they find the school environment and the extent to which they are encouraged or pressured in that environment. When students are provided with a positive and supportive environment, they are more confident and calmer. But if the environment is harsh, unfriendly or unsupported, their anxiety increases. Often students become stressed due to the expectations of others, pressure from parents or their own high expectations. As a result of this pressure, some students work harder and try to succeed at all costs. They spend extra time studying and use their energy excessively. On the other hand, some students become overwhelmed by this pressure and stop trying. Such students

lose focus, lose interest in studies and sometimes they give up because they do not understand how to deal with this pressure. These behaviors affect their performance and weaken their confidence. In addition, academic anxiety also exhausts them physically and mentally. Therefore, it is important that schools and teachers provide an environment where students get encouragement, guidance and support. Parents should also not put unnecessary pressure on children but should help them by understanding their abilities. If students' anxiety is to be reduced and they should focus better on their studies, then their hard work must be appreciated and supported, then only they will become more confident and successful. As we know that everyone handles difficult situations differently. Some people keep moving forward despite the pressure and continue their efforts, and some people find it difficult to cope up with the situation. When anxiety increases to the extreme, it negatively impacts the studies of students. Which leads to weakening their self-confidence. Not only studies but also anxiety affects many aspects of their personality and daily life. Therefore, academic anxiety is a problem that cannot be ignored. It is very important to understand it and know its causes. Teachers and parents should provide an environment for students where stress is low. In this way, students can perform at their best and move forward with confidence.

The Methodology for Literature Review

Here's how the literature review was carried out to understand academic anxiety among students:

Search Strategy ans Selection Process

To identify relevant studies for the review on academic anxiety among students, a systematic search strategy of 90 studies was employed. Google Scholar, ERIC (Education Resources Information Center), Shortchange, JSTOR, Research Gate, Shodhgangotri, and other academic source databases were searched. Among these 90 studies, 15 were removed as they are the duplicates of some or others. Next, not all studies found were kept. Articles that didn't clearly explain academic anxiety or didn't add much to the topic were left out. Another 15 studies were removed, as they were found to be irrelevant, and incomplete data were found in those studies. The literature selection was limited to studies published between 2014 and 2024 to ensure relevance and up-to-date findings. Therefore, again, 28 studies have been removed, and only those studies that were written in the English language were included. Conference papers, dissertations, and unpublished works were also excluded.

The selected 32 papers were read and studied carefully. After going through all the findings, summed them up, and showed in table

Table 1 – Selected Research Papers for the Study

Sr. No.	Author(s) & Year	Title of the Study	Sample & Location	Methodology	Key Findings
1	Ghattas & El-Ashry (2024)	Perceived Academic Anxiety and Procrastination Among Emergency Nursing Students: The Mediating Role of Cognitive Emotion Regulation	654 nursing students & Convenience sampling	Descriptive correlational design	Nearly half of the students had high anxiety, around 40% had moderate anxiety, and only a few had low anxiety. Most students showed a moderate level of procrastination. The study also found that students who procrastinate more tend to feel more anxious.
2	Li et al. (2024)	Effects of Short-Form Video App Addiction on Academic Anxiety and Academic Engagement: The Mediating Role of Mindfulness	1,879 undergraduate students, China	Survey with standardized scales	Video app addiction increases academic anxiety and lowers academic engagement; mindfulness plays a key role in this relationship
3	Sheeraz et al. (2024)	Academic Anxiety Among Smartphone Addict Adolescent	450 students from govt. higher secondary schools,	Descriptive survey; multistage sampling	Most students addicted to smartphones had above-average academic anxiety; no significant

		Students: Does Gender and Subject Stream Make Any Difference?	Kashmir Valley		difference between boys and girls in anxiety levels
4	Anupma & Sardana (2023)	Academic Stress and Levels of Life Skills Among High School Children	240 students (120 boys, 120 girls), Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh	Formative research	Found gender differences and strong link between academic stress and life skills
5	Saha (2023)	Academic Stress During COVID-19 Among Junior College Students in West Bengal	600 students, West Bengal	Cross-sectional; stratified sampling	Male students experienced more academic stress than females during the pandemic
6	Yang & Wang (2023)	Test Anxiety, Academic Achievement, and Peer Support Among 9th Grade Students	300 students, Shenzhen, China	Questionnaire survey	Higher test anxiety lowers academic performance; male students scored better; peer support improves performance
7	Baro & Mishra (2022)	Academic Anxiety and Socio-Economic Status Among Adolescents	400 students (200 boys, 200 girls), Class 9	Quantitative research	No gender difference in anxiety; academic anxiety was higher in lower socio-economic groups
8	Hasan (2022)	Effects of Gender, Locale, and School Type on Academic Anxiety of	866 students (468 males, 398 females)	Survey; simple random sampling	Female and government school students had higher academic anxiety than males and

		Secondary School Students			private school students
9	Sudheer (2021)	Academic anxiety and aspiration in single-parent families	200 adolescents (100B, 100G)	Survey	Girls had more academic anxiety than boys.
10	AlAteeq et al. (2020)	Stress in virtual classrooms during COVID-19	367 students aged 12+, Saudi Arabia	Survey	Females reported more stress than males in online learning.
11	Teeli (2020)	The effect of anxiety on academic performance of university students	45 students in professional courses	Random sampling	Anxiety had a positive effect on academic performance.
12	Thenmozhi & Poornima (2020)	Academic stress comparison between private and government schools	100 students	Cluster sampling	Private school students had higher stress than govt. school students.
13	Khesht-Masjedi et al. (2019)	Anxiety, depression, and academic achievement among teenagers	666 secondary school students	Survey	Girls more anxious; boys more depressed; anxiety/depression negatively affect achievement.
14	Ozgan et al. (2019)	Relationship between test anxiety and academic performance	150 students (114F, 36M) in USA	Multi-institutional survey	No significant relationship between test anxiety and academic performance.

15	Sanjeet et al. (2019)	Relationship between test anxiety and academic performance	240 undergraduate medical students	Cross-sectional study	10.8% had unhealthy anxiety; unhealthy anxiety linked to poorer performance.
16	Sharma & Shakir (2019)	Academic anxiety of senior secondary students in relation to locale and school type	355 students	Self-constructed tool	Urban & private school students had more anxiety than rural & govt. school students.
17	Sultan & Bhat (2019)	Academic anxiety of rural and urban secondary school students	400 students (200M, 200F)	Survey	Females and rural students had more anxiety than their counterparts.
18	Azeem (2018)	Academic anxiety and academic achievement of secondary students	340 students, Aligarh city	Random sampling	No gender/religion difference; anxiety negatively correlated with achievement.
19	Kaur & Chawla (2018)	Academic anxiety of adolescents in terms of school adjustment	60 students aged 14–18	Survey	Girls were more academically anxious than boys.
20	Alam (2017)	Relation between academic anxiety and achievement in	200 secondary & senior secondary students	Survey	Moderately anxious students performed better than highly or low-anxious ones.

		Murshidabad students			
21	Sharma & Pandey (2017)	Anxiety, depression and stress in relation to academic achievement	120 students (60 boys, 60 girls), Class 11	Survey	Anxiety, stress, and depression negatively impact academic achievement.
22	Banga & Sharma (2016)	Academic anxiety in relation to gender, locale, and social category	200 senior secondary students, Kangra (HP)	Purposive sampling	Boys had higher anxiety than girls; no locale or caste differences.
23	Dawood et al. (2016)	Test anxiety and academic achievement of undergraduate nursing students	277 nursing students	Descriptive, cross-sectional	14.4% had severe anxiety, 50.9% moderate, 25% mild anxiety.
24	Ghosh (2016)	Academic stress among government and private high school students	200 high school students (100 govt, 100 private)	Survey	Private school and female students had higher academic stress.
25	Hasan (2016)	Academic anxiety and academic achievement of secondary students by gender	204 students, Aligarh district	Purposive sampling	Anxiety negatively correlated with achievement; no gender difference.
26	Sindhu (2016)	Impact of anxiety with academic achievement	20 undergraduate students	Beck's Inventory	Students with low scores had higher anxiety.

		of engineering students			
27	Shibli et al. (2015)	Effects of anxiety on achievement and performance: A college study	150 college students (75M, 75F)	Structured interviews	No significant link between anxiety and academic achievement.
28	Singh (2015)	Impact of anxiety on academic achievement of U.G. students	500 undergraduate students, Varanasi	Quota sampling	Low anxiety positively linked to academic achievement.
29	Singh & Singh (2015)	Examination anxiety of B.Ed. students in govt. and private colleges	200 B.Ed. students (100 govt, 100 private)	Random sampling	Exam anxiety varied before/after exams; differences seen between govt. and private students.
30	Banga (2014)	Academic anxiety among high school students in relation to gender and family type	200 9th class students, Govt. schools	Convenient sampling	No significant difference by gender or family type.
31	Bihari (2014)	Academic anxiety among secondary school students with reference to gender, habitat, and school type	114 secondary school students from 4 govt. and 2 private schools	Simple random sampling	Gender and habitat had no impact; private school students had less anxiety and performed better.
32	Shakir (2014)	Academic anxiety as a	361 adolescents,	Correlation study	Negative relationship

		correlate of academic achievement	Aligarh district		between anxiety and achievement; moderate anxiety is motivational.

Key Findings from Existing Research

- Among school and college students, academic anxiety found to be a common and significant problem.
- It has a negative impact on overall well-being of students including academic performance, learning experiences etc.
- For developing effective coping strategies, it is very much essential to understand an academic anxiety.
- It has been found that, anxiety is directly or indirectly having a negative impact on student performance as well as on mental health.
- Many students experience moderate to high levels of academic anxiety, especially during their exams, expectations from performance, and even curriculum demands.
- Several studies have found that there is a gender differences, girls showed higher levels of anxiety than boys. However, some studies have found no significant gender differences, suggesting that contextual, social factors and some other factors also also play a significant role.
- Public school students showed lower anxiety level than private school students, and urban students reported higher levels of anxiety than their counterpart rural students. Which can be concluded that, the school type and locality of students are affected anxiety.
- Apart from all these, digital distractions, like smartphone addiction, social media addiction and excess use of short-form video apps, are associated with anxiety and lower their academic engagement and achievement.
- Many studies concluded that, academic anxiety is negatively correlated with academic performance. In other words, we can say that, increased anxiety level among students directly reduces their success and confidence level.

Conclusions

In conclusion, we can say that emotional well-being is key to academic success, especially during exams, as academic anxiety is a common problem among students. Severe anxiety can hinder student performance and moderate and low anxiety can boost focus and motivation. Therefore, institutions should proactively address exam-related stress. The effects of anxiety can be significantly reduced by providing a supportive school environment, promoting open communication skills, and incorporating mental health awareness into education, which will provide a healthy learning environment for students. In addition, various strategies such as mindfulness, guidance and counseling sessions, curriculum changes, etc. can also reduce anxiety levels in students.

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Exploring 'One Nation-One Education' System in India

Shabnam[1]

Abstract

The concept of "One Nation, One Education" recently attracted scholarly interest in the Indian context as a possible conduit for systemic change to reduce educational inequality and promote equity, national cohesion, and fair access to high-quality education. The paper critically investigates whether a unified national education system can be implemented in India, whether or not it is constitutionally valid, and examines the potential positive and negative aspects of such an endeavour. The paper is based on a systematic review of secondary data sources, including empirical research, constitutional clauses, relevant court cases, legislation, books, research articles, academic journals, newspaper commentary, government reports, and policy documents, which discusses the overall idea of a single national education system. Results show that the implementation of a rigid, centralized approach can undermine the democratic and multiculturalist foundations of the Indian educational environment. Despite having the potential to promote educational equity, the effective implementation of the uniform education system will depend on meeting localized needs, increasing capacity, ensuring stakeholders 'involvement, and addressing the challenges of uniformity.

Keywords: *One Nation, One Education, Constitution, Curriculum, Legal Framework.*

Introduction

The 'One Nation, One Education' refers to a single, standardized education system across the nation. Which aim to eliminate inequalities, promote equal opportunity for all students regardless of socio-economic status, culture, or region; provide a unified curriculum; enhance quality, foster a sense of national unity, and democratize educational opportunities. (Cheng & Yen, 2017). It also aims to provide all children with a level playing field to all students. This is an idea for a centralised education system where children receive the same teaching plans, assessment methods, and training (Urevbu, 1984). The 'One Nation, One Education' idea focuses on a uniform syllabus that emphasizes equal access to quality education nationwide and is grounded in the constructs of equity, excellence, and national cohesion (Sharif, 2020). In accordance with Upadhyay (2020), this is an attempt to reduce

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inequities in the educational system and establish a common national educational framework that provides equal opportunities to all students in terms of academic experiences and achievements. Education policy (1968, 1986, 1992), through the Right to Education Act (2009) and the Non-Detention Policy (2019), emphasized shared curricula and quality education. National Education Policy 2020 also inclined towards a more unified, standardised education to reduce existing inequalities in education, along with many centrally sponsored initiatives such as PM Poshan, Samagra Shiksha, Padhna Likhna Abhiyan, and Merit Scholarships, is dedicated to establishing a quality education system particularly emphasizes historically marginalised, disadvantaged, and underrepresented groups, serving as an effective equalizer and a vital instrument for attaining equality, inclusion, economic and social mobility(Department of School Education, 2025). However, in India, the education system exhibits significant disparity across school systems and education boards. At the national level, NCERT develops the school curriculum, while at the state level, SCERTs prepare the curriculum. The existence of many boards and councils has resulted in significant educational disparities. This disparity may negatively affect students throughout their lives. One key question that arises out of the overall discussion is: Will a single education system across the country be an acceptable concept for such a diverse country as India? This paper explores the positive and negative consequences of implementing a "one nation, one education" model in India. This is with the hope of contributing to the ongoing conversation and informing better choices by providing the relevant data.

Objectives of the Study

To explore the practical need, importance, and feasibility of implementation of the ‘One Nation, One Education’ system in India.

Significance of the Study

The ‘One Nation, One Education’ system nationwide has gained momentum nationally in recent years. Although both the need and justification behind implementing One Nation, One Education are widely accepted, there is limited research on the issue, which has important implications for education policy and practice. Dinesh Singh Sagar (2020), Nawaz Sharif (2020), and Venudhar Routiya et al. (2024) have all provided evidence that developing a nationalized standardized curriculum could lead to positive impacts. Equally as important is developing an understanding of the implications of a unified education

system on national development and educational reform. This paper, therefore, seeks to contribute to the body of knowledge in this area by providing a dispassionate examination of arguments and opinions supporting the development of a "one nation, one education system".

Methodology of the Study

This paper employed a descriptive and qualitative approach to investigate "One Nation, One Education". Secondary data were collected from national education policies, constitution provisions, judicial decisions, government documents, research papers, and policy commentary. An analysis of each document was conducted to identify key concepts, themes, and issues related to curriculum standardization, educational equity, regional diversity, federal governance, and instructional relevance as they relate to the theme of unifying the education system in India. These identified themes and issue were grouped into thematic categories that guided the interpretation of results. To increase the credibility of the findings, information from various documents was compared and contrasted for consistency. Analytical objectivity was maintained throughout the study by using empirical evidence as the basis for interpretation, rather than normative opinions. This methodology provides an objective, yet balanced, examination of the potential benefits and practical problems associated with developing and implementing a single national education system in India.

Result and Discussion

The findings are organised into three main categories: objectives-wise, constitutional and legal justifications, possible advantages, and practical difficulties with discussion.

Voices for Demand for One Nation, One Education System for India, Judicial Declarations, Court Rulings on the Execution of the One Nation, One Education System.

In 2020, Advocate Ashwini Kumar Upadhyay filed a petition in the Supreme Court for the implementation of a ‘One Nation One Curriculum’ unified national education system for children aged 6 to 14. By citing ‘Article 21A’ of the Constitution, the petitioner grounded the adoption of this idea. He further highlighted that the current state of education in India is characterised by a fragmented framework, in which various educational bodies develop their syllabi and curricula, thereby creating inequality.

The petitioner further argued that the national-level competitive examinations follow the CBSE Syllabus. Therefore, most children are unable to gain admission to a premium academic institution or crack a job examination. The disparity and inconsistency in syllabi undermine the ultimate objective of educational equality, creating inequality and impeding equal opportunities for all students (Dutta, 2024). Further, the petitioner argued that it is required to adopt compulsory chapters in textbooks on '*fundamental rights, duties, directive principles'*, and the fundamental objectives outlined in the preamble of the 'Constitution of India' to promote democratic values.

The petitioner has shown empirical evidence about how severe this problem is as of now despite of Free Right to Education Act of 2009; Government school-going children had lower levels of academic achievement compared to those attending private schools in India. The petitioner emphasized the need for structural change to create a common educational system based on values (a single curriculum/syllabus) to replace the current structure; the second petition in this same series was filed in 2017 by Neeta Upadhyay, a primary school teacher in Ghaziabad; in her petition she stated that the current educational system does not offer equal opportunity to all. This goes against Article 16 of the Indian Constitution. As per the petition, there should be a universal educational system.

The Indian Judiciary has consistently recognized the right to education as a fundamental right. It has assessed several aspects of educational programs to determine compliance with the Constitution provisions. Landmark judgments of the Supreme Court have emphasized the requirement of providing fair and quality education (Routiya et al., 2024).

In 2020, the Supreme Court refused to entertain a plea for a single national education board nationwide for school education. A bench led by Justice DY Chandrachud told the petitioner, "*Our children are already carrying hefty bags. Their backs are already burdened. Why do you want to add more? Increasing the number of books will enhance the study load on small children.*" This was not the first time the Supreme Court dismissed a petition seeking a one-nation-one curriculum system; in 2017, the Court also rejected a plea filed by a primary school teacher. A bench of Chief Justice Dipak Misra and Justices AK Khan Wilkar and DY Chandrachud stated that a uniform system is not feasible for school education. In 2018, a bench of Justices AK Goel and UU Lalit informed the petitioner on the demand for uniform education that "*It looks very attractive but may not be implementable, the court cannot issue orders that are impractical to implement*". *This is a*

policy matter and comes under the government's jurisdiction; it would be better to ask the government" (Rajajagopal, 2017).

Possible Benefits of Implementing 'One Nation, One Education System' in India

There are several benefits to implementing a one-nation, one-education system.

Minimizes Education Gaps: Due to significant gaps across State education systems, including rural and urban areas, large and small cities, and public and private schools, the "One Nation One Education" concept offers an opportunity to close the education gaps. Additionally, a single education system for the entire nation may provide students with equal quality and equitable education practices and processes (Welle-Strand & Tjeldvoll, 2002).
Equal Opportunities for All: The 'One Nation, One Education' unifies the education system across India, ensuring that all students have equal access to foundational knowledge as well as the potential to continue their education at a higher level. Therefore students from all regions of the country can compete equally in National Competitive Exams such as IIT JEE, NEET, and UPSC.

Easy Transfer: The One Nation, One Education makes transfer much easier for students to move from one school to another or from one state to another within India. As stated earlier, this will also eliminate the disruption due to the changes in curriculum when students change schools (Ghosh, 2023).

Empowers Teachers: This is a significant key to developing a coordinated teacher education and professional development process. This coordination will help create a national faculty development framework that ensures teachers have equal access to educational materials, have been trained uniformly, and are better supported as they instruct in the classroom.

National Integration: One Nation, One Education will help promote national unity by encouraging young Indians to share a common understanding of their cultural heritage and values. The use of common educational materials and curriculum will enable students from all over India to have a similar educational experience regardless of where they live or their family's socio-economic status. As such, this initiative will help promote both social and educational equity in education (Ghosh, 2023)

Learning Outcomes: According to the Annual Status of Education Report (2023), about 50% of elementary school children in rural India cannot meet the reading and writing

expectations of their grade, and cannot perform basic math operations at the expected level. As an example, these statistics illustrate a large gap between what students are learning and what they should be learning. Additionally, there are significant differences in student academic performance between public and private schools in many regions of the country; these differences are mainly due to factors including the quality of school facilities, the number of teachers available, and how students are being instructed. Thus, if "One Nation, One Education" implemented, it can close the academic learning gap.

Equity and Inclusive Education: The present education system in India is inequitable, it requires systemic reforms that provide equal access to quality educational opportunities and resources for all students. Thus, implementing the "One Nation, One Education" could make education more standardized and equitable (Sagar, 2020).

Simplifying the Examination Process: A unified education system can create a level playing field for all students; specifically, it will enable them to compete equally in competitive exams and in admissions to higher education. A common foundation will reduce the disparities between the State Education Boards and the National Education Board. In addition, common education can reduce regional political influences during admissions. With the establishment of a national system for assessments and admissions, the national framework will provide greater transparency and allow for merit-based selection (Upadhyay, 2020).

Reducing Stratification and Inequality

Implementing a unified national education framework that provides a single national curriculum would eliminate discriminatory educational practices based on caste, creed, religion, gender, or socio-economic status. This framework will enable students to receive equal opportunity to learn and be assessed according to the same standards and criteria.

Challenges of Implementing 'One Nation, One Education System' in India

There are many challenges in implementing the 'One Nation, One Education System" in India. Challenges arising from various stakeholders in education, including teachers, students, parents, institutions, the community, diverse cultures, regional diversity, awareness, language variety, infrastructure, resources, political will, the need to maintain consistent standards, policy stability, teacher training and capacity building, balancing

financial burdens, and integrating technology, are some significant challenges further are detailed below:

Challenging for Students

A sudden change in the curriculum would create academic uncertainty and disruption for students and could affect their success and future education. Additionally, one nation-one education can result in more financial burdens placed upon parents, teachers, and other stakeholders.

Undermines Regional Knowledge, Cultural, and Linguistic Diversity

In India, different states have unique terrestrial cultures and histories that they prefer to integrate into their students' curricula. Furthermore, children's job aspirations and academic interests vary. It is also whether the varied population in this country will put their faith in a centrally constituted committee to make decisions about the future of children's education. During an interview, former NCERT Director Prof. J. Rajput stated, "*If we were to create a textbook on environmental studies for fifth grade, we would need to consider how to make it accessible to all students, given their diverse backgrounds and learning preferences across India.*" The adoption of one nation, one education system across the nation may inadvertently result in students missing out on learning experiences specific to their regional history, arts, literature, culture, and heritage. Policymakers can face challenges in incorporating local interests and cultural features into the educational system.

There is a marked difference in the education of children residing within the Eastern part of India compared to those residing in the other three regions (North East, South, and North). Additionally, there has been a noticeable disparity among State Boards in the relative priority assigned to curriculum development. Language issues also appear to be prevalent. The CBSE places significant emphasis on the works of well-known authors in the texts it uses for teaching, while the Boards in Maharashtra, U.P., Bihar, and Chhattisgarh place greater emphasis on the works of local authors. As such, where students from North East India, South India, and West Bengal elect to take Hindi as an optional subject, their cognitive understanding of the subject matter is likely to differ from that of students from predominantly Hindi-speaking areas, which adds another layer of concern.

Pedagogical Concerns and Needs of Diverse Learners

The implementation of a uniform education nationwide can lead to the loss of diversity and the fundamental principles of the democratic education system. During the developmental phase, our children need to acquire a broad and diverse knowledge of their regional socio-cultural environment (Reddy, 2021). According to psychology, each child has unique attributes and should not be subjected to a uniform education curriculum. Moreover, learning progresses from the familiar to the unfamiliar, from the immediate to the distant; thus, it raises significant concerns regarding the justification for teaching children about cultures they have never encountered (Kumar, 2021).

Federal Disruption and Politicalization of Curriculum

The endeavour to unify the education system across the country may disrupt the federal structure. Top-down imposition limits the state's autonomy and decision-making power on education (The Legal Quorum, 2023). This also contrasts with the Gandhian governance philosophy and violates Article 246 of the Indian Constitution, which places education on the concurrent list of shared responsibilities between the central and state governments. The unified education across the nation was also opposed by the Yashpal Committee (1992-92), although the 2020 National Education Policy (NEP) advocates several changes, it does not specify implementing centralised education. NEP 2020 places flexibility, equity, and inclusivity at the forefront. Furthermore, the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) supports curriculum changes (National Education Policy, 2020).

While there are many countries that implemented One Nation, One Education type schooling (for example, UK, China, Singapore, France, Norway, and Finland), the One Nation, One Education program is not unique to Indonesia. In fact, Indonesia implemented standardized education, the National Education Standards (SNP), to promote quality education throughout Indonesia (Helda & Syahrani, 2022). National Education Standards provide the structure for developing a plan to implement education, as well as monitoring education nationally and locally, and the ultimate goal is to develop a high-quality national education system and shape students' characters (which is very interesting). While some countries attempt to establish a national education system, others may face challenges in doing so. For example, although Canada prides itself on its multiculturalism, it has still been unable to establish complete racial equity in education (George et al., 2019). Therefore, creating equal educational opportunities in areas with varying population densities remains a significant challenge. In addition to attempting to create a cohesive national education system where all people, through education, can apply its principles, it can be difficult.

Sometimes, such regulations do not lead to unity and provide each child with equal opportunity for success (CII Education, 2024). As stated by Aithal & Aithal (2020), the rigid top-down approach to education can stifle grassroots innovations, experiments, and creative expression; therefore, personalized education is tailored to meet the needs of the community at large, rather than a one-size-fits-all education.

Recommendation

Policy Making: to develop and implement policies comprehensively, all stakeholders, including teachers, experts, School Administrators, State Officials, Parents, and Teaching Professionals, should be involved.

School Infrastructure and Teacher Training: implementing nation, one education would require an investment in Teacher Training in Schools, Infrastructure, Digital Access to the Internet and Learning Resources, particularly in Disadvantaged Rural and Tribal Areas.

Preservation of India's Cultural Diversity: The rich cultural diversity of the country should not be undermined. The local Literature and the History of the Country should not be taken away from Students' curricula.

Pilot Projects: Before implementing it on a large scale, the Government should run Pilot Projects in some States to test their practicality and to gather feedback from stakeholders and others before final implementation.

Limitations of the Study

This study is a qualitative study entirely based on secondary data. No empirical data collected with administrators, teachers, or students are included. Future research can benefit from empirical investigations across a range of areas and stakeholder perspectives, as well as a more complete understanding of ground reality.

Further Research

Future research can explore all stakeholders' perspectives on a unified education system. Further investigations can also be conducted on the National Curriculum Framework (NCF), NEP 2020, the views of different stakeholders, and Comparative studies to address issues and ideas.

Conclusion

This research explored the "one nation, one education" system through assessing constitutional foundation of this concept, possible advantages and disadvantages, as well as barriers to successful implementation. It was concluded that there are legitimate reasons for implementing a uniform national education system. Although the research results showed positive outcomes for the unification of education system in India, it also highlighted the many negative outcomes. Furthermore, judicial decisions and debates over this concept have demonstrated the impracticability of implementing in a country such as India, which has a highly diverse population.

In conclusion, achieving education equality is not achievable by adopting a "one size fits all" model. Therefore, if policymakers decide to pursue a single national education policy, it must be developed with flexibility, sensitivity to local contexts, and stakeholders' involvement. Instead of, attempting to achieve uniformity in education, policymakers should focus on developing common minimum learning standards; education curricula that adapt to the needs of different regions; investing in the equitable education infrastructure; and supporting teacher development and training. An incremental, consultative, and pilot-based approach will likely provide a more viable route for education reform, while continuing to preserve the democratic and multicultural foundations of Indian education.

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A Historical and Educational Perspective of the Panchatantra: A Pedagogical Analysis

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Abstract

The Panchatantra tales are as old as time and an amalgam of philosophy, knowledge and perspective on life. The word Panchatantra is composed of two words - Pancha and Tantra: Pancha meaning five and Tantra meaning strategy or technique. So, taken together, the Panchatantra aimed to teach the five strategies of Politics, Public Administration and Niti Shastra (the wisely code of conduct) – disciplines that are as important in today's globalised world. These tales were composed by Pandit Vishnu Sharma in the court of the king, Amarshakti. The purpose of the tales was to teach young princes of the king the art of statecraft. Along with sharing nuggets of wisdom on the dharma of a ruler, Panchatantra tales are valuable as they hold the essence of life. The research paper illustrates the importance of this revered and ancient text through the times up to the contemporary debates on education apparatus and government policies. The theory of Naturalism as propounded by later thinkers like Rabindranath Tagore too finds echo in this old text and serves as a road map for present-day educators and manifests the importance of the Panchatantra.

Keywords-*Panchatantra, Story-telling, Moral Education, Naturalism, Animal Fables*

Introduction

The Panchatantra is a collection of children's fables and animal stories that are enjoyable to read and engaging to listen to. The stories in the Panchatantra include beautiful illustrations and animal characters that have been personified to embody human attributes (Kulkarni, 2013). The motive of the stories is to teach children valuable moral lessons about life and being. While this is true that all Indian children grow up listening to the Panchatantra tales from their grandparents and parents, what one cannot miss out on is the voracious history that abounds in this piece of Indian literature. The text is as old as time. It was written under the auspices of Pandit Vishnu Sharma who composed it during 200 BCE - 300 CE in the Kashmir valley. Like most ancient literature, the stories were written in the form of *sutras* and *smritis* and were narrated by the means of oral tradition (Verma, et. al, 2018). The policy

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was to teach rulers and their sons the guidelines and principles of ruling the state by utilising their best practices. In this way, the stories of the Panchatantra acted like a compendium of social and moral code of conduct that the king was supposed to abide by and in other ways, the Panchatantra tales were an equivalent of Kautilya's Arthashastra: a treatise on statecraft as they served the rulers with precepts of navigating problems with ease related to their kingdom. This style of narration of the Panchatantra continued well into the modern times and even the present translations or interpolations follow a similar format. It uses dialogues where two characters interact with each other and provide moral lessons in the end of the story. The aphorisms used in the Panchatantra stories are profound and convey a strong message using only minimal words (Lamsal, 2023). An example of one such aphorism from the Panchatantra tale could be 'Unity is strength, division is weaknesses. Thus, the brevity and crisp logic of the stories makes them engaging and instructional. The five elements included in the Panchatantra include - Mitra-bheda: The Separation of Friends, Mitra-labha or Mitra-samprapti: The Gaining of Friends, Kakolukiyam: On War and Peace, Labdhpranasam: Loss of Gains, Apariksitakarakam: Consequences of Ill-Considered Deeds etc. These were the major five themes mentioned in the Panchatantra in a group of seventy-two short stories divided under these major five heads (Kulkarni, 2013). These stories reflected the everyday problems that a king would face in dealing with people at his court and his subjects. Thus, the Panchatantra served as his ready go-to guide within the premises of the kingdom. This nature of the Panchatantra continued over time spanning epochs and continents.

Research Objective

The paper attempts to establish the importance of ancient Indian text that is a bunch of moral tales and its utility in the context of the present education system. The ancient tales of the Panchatantra are a repository of moral values and educational precepts that can lead to holistic development of the individual. The paper posits to establish this by situating the text in the creative imagination of modern educationists and philosophers of the 19th-20th century and also reviews its importance in the 21st century in the light of National Education Policy, 2020. Educational institutions, educators and students will benefit by incorporating ancient Indian philosophy within their curriculum.

Research Methodology

The work utilises secondary data and textual analysis of content to authenticate the theme of the research. This is a descriptive & analytic study with qualitative elements that uses historical and policy review to establish itself. The different items used include:

1. Official report on the National Education Policy (2020), Government of India
2. Historical landscape of the Panchatantra
3. Review of tales from the Panchatantra
4. Understanding the philosophy of eminent educationists

Hence, this research is based on historical review of the ancient Indian text called the Panchatantra that was put to compilation during the Gupta times and has been a source of wisdom ever since, continuing well into the present times. The paper also engages with policy review of the Government of India on education matters offering new insights into the Indian Knowledge System and its incorporation in curriculum of Indian schools and universities. Data has been attested at the end to reflect upon this aspect. The information is in tabular form for ease of comprehension. However, an analysis also brings out the inherent lacunae in adopting old tales in toto for classroom teaching at higher levels of education. Therefore, the thrust must be put on accommodating those aspects of the Panchatantra that can be feasible in the dynamic education system of the day. In this respect, this is also a suggestive study.

The Origin and Popularity of the Text

Historians are divided on ascertaining a fixed date to the composition of this text. However, the convention is to date it between 200 BCE - 400 CE. The birth story of the Panchatantra goes like: Once upon a time, in ancient India, there was a kingdom in the south called ‘Mahilaropya’ and ‘Amarshakti’ was the king. The king had three sons who were not interested in studies in any way. The king was always worried regarding their studies and their future as the successors of the kingdom. One day he set up the royal durbar and asked his council of ministers for advice on this issue. The prime minister suggested to him a man called Pandit Vishnu Sharma. Pandit Vishnu Sharma was a well-versed Brahmin. Amarshakti listened to his minister’s advice and Pandit Vishnu Sharma was immediately invited to the court. The king requested him to accept his sons as his own disciples and educate them. Vishnu Sharma readily accepted the challenge and took an oath to teach the princes and make them well learned within six months. The learned Brahmin, of course, kept the promise.

By the end of six months, the princes had assimilated all the virtues of kingship and sound rule. The method used by Pandit Vishnu Sharma was one of narration and storytelling. He used several anecdotes to teach valuable lessons to the princes. This method of oral tradition, which was also the only prevalent form of transferring knowledge in ancient India, became the basis of the Panchatantra stories. They were later written down around 600 CE and were preserved for later generations, with due translations and interpolations from time to time (Basu, 2024). In India itself, the Panchatantra had almost twenty-five known recensions, in both Sanskrit and vernacular dialects including Kannada, Gujarati, Marathi, Braj Bhasha, Malayalam and Tamil, many of which underwent radical reconstructions with omissions, errors, variations of texts and entirely new additions (Cohen, et. al., 2017). Modern scholars depending on references of earlier Sanskrit works in Panchatantra assign the period of 300 - 500 CE for its composition in today's form. It migrated to Iran in 600 CE and was translated into Arabic with the title '*Kalila wa Dimnah*' by Ibn Al' Muqaffa in 750 CE. This famous composition then travelled the world over and was translated into different formats. During the last 1500 years there have been at least 200 translations in about 60 languages of the world. Aesop fables, Arabian Nights, Sindbad and more than 30 - 50% of western nursery rhymes and ballads have their origin in the Panchatantra and Jataka stories. The work of the French fabulist, Jean de La Fontaine which had soared him to popularity in France was inspired from the Panchatantra (Cohen, et. al., 2017) The Panchatantra translations enjoyed great popularity and were considered a masterpiece of Arabic narrative literature. Almost all pre-modern European translations of Panchatantra had their roots in the Arabic translation of Muqaffa. The text eventually became a sensation in world literature.

Pedagogical Utility of Panchatantra

The present education system is fraught with challenges like lacking moral development of students, lack of social and interpersonal skills like empathy, sound communication, leadership and moral education that would contribute in building a holistic personality. Children are drawn more into the precepts of technical and industry-based education while lacking the most mundane character-building skills. These skills include wisdom and intelligence (*buddhi*), friendship and cooperation, honesty and integrity, prudence and foresight, justice, fairness, self-control and discipline. The spiritual element of education needs to be revived, which can only be done by fostering a love for all living beings and

living in harmony with oneself and Mother Nature. An in-depth knowledge of human emotions, values and social ethics can be instilled by the Panchatantra (S.K. et. al.).

The tales of the Panchatantra can be a milestone in this direction as they teach these skills through the method of story-telling and dialogue and students at all ages can derive something of value from the Panchatantra tales. The stories of the Panchatantra are succinct and informative. They do not appear wordy and are set in natural surroundings making the characters appear amiable and friendly. The classroom education in the contemporary times that focuses on rote memorisation and mugging up of facts leaves zero room for creativity. Great educationist thinkers and philosophers like Rabindranath Tagore proposed the ideas of naturalism, espousing learning in the natural environment giving practical examples and lessons (Dutta). This can be drawn from the method employed by Pandit Vishnu Sharma and his stories that focused on imparting knowledge set in a naturalistic environment. To teach students difficult concepts, the formula of storytelling, visualisation and narration can be used which shall involve the participation of a large number of pupils within and outside the classroom, ultimately leading to a fun way of learning that is enjoyable, creative, responsive, active, inclusive and flexible. Rather than empty preaching of boring concepts, the method of storytelling can be used to teach important ideas in an easier fashion. Another merit of using stories woven around an important theme can utilise the power of concentration that will be its by-product as any new learning requires one to concentrate thoroughly. This can be easily achieved with this method. Students become more receptive when taught through tales. Education that takes place in close proximity to nature builds harmony and peace (Keninger, et. al. 2013).

Moreover, moral education that seems lacking in this fast-paced world can be revived through introducing the archaic yet effective methods of teaching that are inherent in the Panchatantra tales. This will bolster the spiritual element in education apparatus as opposed to the highly mechanical and technical medium of instruction.

Panchatantra: From the Perspective of Eminent Educationists

Panchatantra has always fired the imagination of eminent educationists like Shri Aurobindo Ghosh (1872-1950). He gave the concept of **Integral Education** that refers to moral as well as spiritual development of an individual so that she meets her fullest potential. This philosophy of Ghosh found reverberation in the foundation of *Auroville* by one of his disciples in Pondicherry, South India. (Pillai, S. 2005). *Auroville* is an institution where

learning blends with nature and spirituality offering an all-round development. Naturalists like Shri Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941) have also focused on creative and nature-blended learning. His *Vishwa-Bharti* institution was a testament to this belief system. In later years of his life, Tagore entrusted Mahatma Gandhi as the guardian of the Vishwa Bharti campus in West Bengal ensuring its protection and conservation as a unique cultural heritage of India. Even Mahatma Gandhi's proposition of the *Nayi Taleem* in 1937 was a firm rooting of the principles of morality in education along with vocation-based learning.

Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan (1888-1975) has helped establish education on a moral pedestal in post-independent India. For him, education and learning divorced from truth, spirituality and morality is of no good use for a human or the nation. These ideas and practices have found reflection in several education policy matters of India. Moral and Behavioural Education is considered a critical aspect of school curriculum in India and "The Compulsory Imparting of Moral Education in Educational Institutions in India, 2014" was a stepping stone in this direction.

Modern educationists of India have thus focused on creative learning and moral and character development of individuals for all-round holistic development.

Relevance of the Panchatantra in light of New Education Policy, 2020

In the light of the prospects of the National Education Policy, 2020, government has pushed for educational units to devise curriculum and pedagogy that is "*holistic, integrated, enjoyable and engaging*" at the school level and that which aims to create empathetic, energetic, capable, motivated and visionary youth through the higher education scheme. Also, pupils who are industry ready. Moreover, the Central Advisory Board of Education has laid down its guidelines for the promotion of Indian languages, arts and culture. The Panchatantra shall form one of the important aspects of this framework. The incorporation of the Panchatantra tales in the curriculum of schools and universities can push for moral alongside material development of individuals. The New Education Policy 2020 has instilled the government's aim of pushing for tribal, indigenous and traditional ways of learning. The Indian Knowledge System will provide a new and fascinating arena to school-going students at their secondary level of education. Audio-visual mediums and digital knowledge bases will be used to create a conducive environment for students to learn from the heritage of India's ancient past (Selvi, 2023). Such innovative methods of teaching will act as breakwaters in the mechanical ways of teaching and learning by which the classrooms

of the present education system are flushed. Therefore, the utility of the Panchatantra stories in the current pedagogy is manifold and can be surmised as under:

- **Development of Behavioural & Moral Values** - As a moral guide, the Panchatantra embodies narratives that can teach children invaluable ethics like integrity, truthfulness, empathy, loyalty and justice. For example, the famous story of the crocodile, monkey and sweet grapes demonstrates friendship and betrayal. Navigating human relationships with ease is a skill that can be learnt through these amiable animal characters and through the tales of the Panchatantra.

- **Critical Thinking & Decision Making** - Critical thinking is the skill of this century. It makes or breaks the person's perspective in situations that present a dilemma. These skills can be engrained with the tales of the Panchatantra.

- **Linguistic Proficiency & Communication Skills** - The characters in the tales are communicative, they present their ideas with brevity and succinctness. This gives a lesson for us to communicate only the most important ideas and to always think before speaking. This tends to solve most of our life problems as we do not repent the consequences of ill-spoken or ill-received words. Children learn good communication skills with these tales at their foundational stage that go a long way into their future.

- **Resuscitating the Method of Storytelling** - Storytelling is the essence of Indian culture (Banerjee) This is demonstrated by the fact that we have had such a large foray of written literature, dramas, plays and epics since ancient times. Buddhists, Jains and Hindus have produced efficient pieces of written works. The Panchatantra and Jataka Tales are examples of this scholarship. Moreover, the oral tradition of listening and learning from the spoken word forms a major medium of how knowledge has been transmitted through the millennia. Storytelling has a profound impact on one's memory and people learn better.

- **Adaptation and Integration of these stories in Modern Educational Perspective** - Educators today continue to find ways in which they can integrate these ancient stories into contemporary learning environments. This can be done by modifying language, incorporating multimedia tools, or contextualising the lessons in modern-

day scenarios (Banerjee). This shall use storytelling and role-playing as tools for better retention and innovativeness in classrooms.

- **Role of Narratives in Fostering Emotional, Cognitive & Social and Emotional Development** - Nothing in this world is absolute or be understood in black and white. These digressions in human behaviour and grey areas of life coerce people to think analytically and help develop their emotional quotient. Thus, these narratives help develop intellectual, emotional and social skills.
- **Help in Building Generational and Cultural Gaps** - The growth and popularity of the Panchatantra tales has already been elaborated upon. The tales have travelled the world and each and every culture has adapted from the wisdom and philosophy of the Panchatantra. This has helped navigate the cultural trajectories that are diverse and appear far-stretched. These stories are old and have connected generations throughout.
- **Dealing with issues like Consumerism & Human Greed** - The catch phrase of the 21st century is consumerism. Television commercials and newspaper advertisements along with celebrity endorsements have nudged people to spend recklessly on commodities that are not of much use in their immediate lives. This spendthrift attitude promotes hoarding of stuff and subsequent wastage of resources. We have become accustomed to acquiring more than we need. This can be further connected to wasteful use of natural resources and the famous aphorism of Gandhiji in this regard, "There is enough for everyone's need, but not for their greed."

Pedagogical Alignment of the Panchatantra with NEP, 2020

The New Education Policy is a call back to rely on Indian cultural heritage, make use of Indian arts and languages, very much how Shri Dayanand Saraswati (1824-1883) had called upon people to fall back on the Vedas to 'find the ultimate truth' in the 19th century. Similarly, the Panchatantra is helpful in reflecting values of the NEP as well. At the school level, curriculum and pedagogy is supposed to be holistic, integrated, enjoyable and engaging. At senior secondary and higher education level, the need for quality research and an individual with such values who can be an asset for society and nation is pressed upon. This can be the case when students are taught to be good citizens who know their social responsibilities and cater to the many dynamic needs of themselves and their co-dependents

in the fast-paced world. The Panchatantra is an old mine that can be dug to align it with modern needs of the classroom towards a more holistic and multi-disciplinary education with a forward-looking vision.

Themes from the Panchatantra & their Utility in Today's Classroom

The different themes that can be assimilated from the tales of the Panchatantra in classrooms at the elementary school and higher levels is as follows:

Table-1 Utility of Themes and Sub-themes from Panchatantra at Level of Education

Main theme	Sub-theme	Use at Middle-High School Level	Use at University Level
Human Nature & Psychology	Greed, Pride, Fear, Manipulation, Ambition	Understanding emotions and behaviour patterns	Better understanding of more complex concepts like psychoanalysis, trauma and intervention techniques
Wisdom & Foresight	Leadership, Decision-Making, Conflict Resolution etc.	Value-education, differentiation between right & wrong	Ethics and Integrity, Decision-Making
Education & Learning	Teacher-student rapport, TLM, Teaching-learning outcome	Values of obedience and respect towards elders, tolerance for all and inclusivity	Andragogy & Heutagogy with a more balanced and sensical procedure
Social Hierarchies	Power, Caste and class structures	Awareness of justice, fair-play or discrimination	Aids understanding of caste struggles, gender construct and other social theories

In these and several other ways, values inherent in the stories of the Panchatantra can help foster life skills among students at the school and college or university level. However, this generalisation will not be entirely true since it is fraught with its own challenges. Human nature is complex and ambiguous. It is not as easy to explain or understand as reflected in the mundane tales of the Panchatantra. The modern society is even more complex and complicated. It involves technology, metaverse and is a globalised knowledge society. Simplicity is of the bygone era. Hence, the simple stories of the Panchatantra are not adept

at assimilating these contradictions with the real world. The invincible solution is to separate wheat from the chaff and utilise the best practices that suit the times and needs of the day!

Conclusion

The Panchatantra tales have immense importance for the current educational medium as the tales of the Panchatantra abound in moral philosophy, wisdom, entertainment and human psychology. They are easier to connect with and the tales contain something for everyone - kids can enjoy the fun element and illustrative stories, young adults can fall back on the nuggets of wisdom inherent in the tales, educators can weave the threads of ancient methods of education inherent in our knowledge system and use them to improvise the fallacies they face in the classroom when dealing with students. It can thus be interpreted that there is no problem so big in this world, the solution to which cannot be found in the Panchatantra! Educators can rely on the tales of Panchatantra for making their classrooms interactive and engaging students at all levels. Storytelling is an ancient method of education that has been used worldwide by philosophers and teachers in ancient Greece, Macedonia, China and India. This can still go a long way in the present-day education apparatus. Today, this is being promoted at the university level through Moral or Behavioural Education periods that comply one day per week alongside the bulky curriculum at college or university level. However, just imparting these values once a week will not do enough but nevertheless, it is a good step in this direction. The fast-paced and technologically smart and sensitive world that we live in today has become the envy of the generations before us but the cost that we pay today for this tech-smart world is simplicity, thoughtfulness, conceptual tempo and soft skills. Educators around the world are now realising the importance of moral education in universities outside as well as inside India. This realisation finds sound manifestation in the New Education Policy of the government as well as the Ministry of Education, Government of India has asked educators to fall back on indigenous and rich cultural heritage of ancient Indian literature to navigate present day classroom problems. This approach is expected to promote culturally inclusive and intellectually and morally relevant growth for students at the school and university level. This will ensure that the present generation of children, most popularly referred to as ‘generation-z’ remain in touch with their rich cultural heritage and ancient wisdom. It is after all, a well-conceived fact that India has always boasted of spiritual upliftment of its pupils along with learning secular and material sciences - incorporating the wisdom of Panchatantra in the current education medium will be a fruitful step in this direction.

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माध्यमिक विद्यार्थियों में परीक्षा तनाव, आत्मबोध और भावनात्मक संतुलन

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शोध सारांश

माध्यमिक शिक्षा वह अवधि है जिसमें विद्यार्थी अपने भविष्य की नींव रखते हैं। इस समय वे मानसिक, शारीरिक और सामाजिक रूप से कई चुनौतियों का सामना करते हैं। परीक्षा तनाव एक गंभीर समस्या बनकर उभरता है, जो उनकी पढ़ाई, मानसिक स्थिरता और व्यक्तित्व को प्रभावित करता है। असफलता का डर, सामाजिक दबाव, और भविष्य को लेकर अनिश्चितता उन्हें भीतर से कमजोर बना देती है। इस शोध पत्र का उद्देश्य इस तनाव के कारणों, प्रभावों और समाधानों का विश्लेषण करना है, ताकि विद्यार्थी तनावमुक्त और संतुलित जीवन जीने की ओर अग्रसर हो सकें। माध्यमिक शिक्षा का दौर विद्यार्थियों के शैक्षणिक, मानसिक और सामाजिक विकास का सबसे महत्वपूर्ण चरण होता है। इस अवस्था में परीक्षा तनाव एक व्यापक और गंभीर समस्या के रूप में सामने आता है, जो विद्यार्थियों के मानसिक स्वास्थ्य, आत्मबोध, और भावनात्मक संतुलन को गंभीर रूप से प्रभावित करता है। विद्यार्थियों को परीक्षा में सफल होने के लिए अत्यधिक दबाव का सामना करना पड़ता है। अभिभावकों की अपेक्षाएं, समाज की तुलना, और भविष्य की अनिश्चितता इस दबाव को और अधिक बढ़ाती हैं। इसका असर केवल विद्यार्थियों के शैक्षणिक प्रदर्शन तक सीमित नहीं रहता, बल्कि उनके मानसिक, शारीरिक और भावनात्मक स्वास्थ्य पर भी पड़ता है। चिंता, अवसाद, आत्मविश्वास की कमी और चरम मामलों में आत्महत्या की प्रवृत्ति जैसे गंभीर परिणाम देखने को मिलते हैं। ऐसे में आत्मबोध और भावनात्मक संतुलन बनाए रखना एक बड़ी चुनौती बन जाता है। इस शोध पत्र का उद्देश्य इन कारणों और प्रभावों की पहचान कर उनके समाधान प्रस्तुत करना है, ताकि विद्यार्थियों को न केवल परीक्षा में सफलता मिले बल्कि वे मानसिक रूप से मजबूत और संतुलित भी बन सकें। इसके लिए विद्यालयों, अभिभावकों और समाज को मिलकर कार्य करने की आवश्यकता है।

बीजशब्द *– माध्यमिक शिक्षा, परीक्षा तनाव, मानसिक स्थिरता, सामाजिक दबाव, आत्मबोध, भावनात्मक संतुलन*

परिचय

माध्यमिक शिक्षा का दौर हर विद्यार्थी के जीवन में एक महत्वपूर्ण मोड़ होता है। इस समय वे बचपन से युवावस्था की ओर बढ़ रहे होते हैं। उनके शारीरिक हार्मोंस परिवर्तन होते हैं, मानसिक रूप से वे अधिक संवेदनशील हो जाते हैं, और भावनात्मक अस्थिरता भी देखने को मिलती है (त्रिपाठी, 2018; कुमार, 2018)। यह वह समय है जब विद्यार्थी अपनी पहचान को लेकर उलझन में होते हैं। वे समझना चाहते हैं कि वे क्या बनना चाहते हैं, उन्हें किस दिशा में जाना है, और उनकी क्षमता क्या है? लेकिन इसी समय उनके ऊपर समाज, माता-पिता, शिक्षकों और साथियों की अपेक्षाओं का बड़ा बोझ भी होता है। विद्यार्थियों को लगातार बताया जाता है कि परीक्षा में अच्छे

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अंक लाना ही उनका भविष्य तय करेगा। यह दबाव धीरे-धीरे उनके भीतर चिंता और डर को जन्म देता है। वे हर समय इस डर में रहते हैं कि यदि वे असफल हुए, तो उनका सपना टूट जाएगा और वे परिवार की नजरों में गिर जाएंगे। यह सोच उनका आत्मविश्वास कमजोर कर देती है (शर्मा, 2019)। परिवार द्वारा भाई-बहनों या दूसरों से तुलना करना, दोस्तों की प्रतिस्पर्धा, शिक्षकों का डांटना और पाठ्यक्रम की अधिकता - ये सभी कारण मिलकर तनाव को और गहरा कर देते हैं (गुप्ता, 2017; सीबीएसई, 2020)। परीक्षा तनाव का असर केवल मानसिक स्तर पर ही नहीं, बल्कि शारीरिक रूप में भी दिखाई देता है। विद्यार्थी ठीक से सो नहीं पाते, उनकी भूख कम हो जाती है, उन्हें सिरदर्द, पेट दर्द या अन्य शारीरिक समस्याएं होने लगती हैं। उनका व्यवहार चिड़चिड़ा हो जाता है, वे छोटी-छोटी बातों पर नाराज हो जाते हैं (सेन, 2021; आईसीएमआर, 2020)। लंबे समय तक यह तनाव जारी रहने पर कई विद्यार्थी अवसाद का शिकार हो जाते हैं। कुछ में घबराहट के दौरे तक आते हैं, और दुर्भाग्यवश कुछ मामलों में आत्महत्या जैसे खतरनाक कदम उठाने की खबरें भी सामने आती हैं (डब्ल्यूएचओ, 2019; यूनिसेफ, 2020)। इसलिए परीक्षा तनाव को हल्की समस्या समझना बड़ी भूल है। यह एक गंभीर मानसिक स्वास्थ्य का मुद्दा है, जिसका समय रहते समाधान करना जरूरी है (भारतीय शिक्षा मंत्रालय, 2021)। न केवल परिवार और शिक्षक, बल्कि समाज को भी इस समस्या को समझना चाहिए और विद्यार्थियों के प्रति अपने रवैये को सकारात्मक और सहयोगी बनाना चाहिए। इस शोध पत्र में परीक्षा तनाव के कारणों, उसके प्रभावों और इससे निपटने के उपायों को विस्तार से समझाने का प्रयास किया गया है।

अध्यापक और विद्यालय की भूमिका

परीक्षा तनाव को कम करने में अध्यापक और विद्यालय की भूमिका बेहद महत्वपूर्ण होती है। शिक्षक केवल पढ़ाने तक सीमित न रहकर विद्यार्थियों के मनोवैज्ञानिक पक्ष को भी समझें, यह ज़रूरी है (एनसीईआरटी, 2019)। वे विद्यार्थियों को पढ़ाई का बोझ नहीं, बल्कि सीखने की प्रक्रिया के रूप में शिक्षा दें। विद्यालयों को विद्यार्थियों के लिए समय-समय पर तनाव-निवारण कार्यशालाओं का आयोजन करना चाहिए (भारतीय शिक्षण अनुसंधान परिषद, 2020)। विद्यार्थियों के साथ संवाद बढ़ाना, उनकी समस्याओं को ध्यान से सुनना और उन्हें प्रोत्साहित करना शिक्षकों का कर्तव्य है। शिक्षकों द्वारा अत्यधिक सख्ती, डांट-फटकार और परिणाम के आधार पर भेदभाव करने से विद्यार्थी पर मानसिक दबाव बढ़ जाता है। इसके स्थान पर उन्हें प्रेरक वातावरण देना अधिक लाभकारी होगा (गुप्ता, 2017)।

अभिभावकों की भूमिका

परीक्षा तनाव से निपटने में माता-पिता की भूमिका सबसे बड़ी है। कई बार माता-पिता अनजाने में अपने बच्चों पर अपेक्षाओं का बोझ डाल देते हैं और तुलना करते हैं, जिससे तनाव और बढ़ जाता है (शर्मा, 2019)। अभिभावकों को यह समझना चाहिए कि हर बच्चा अलग होता है और उसकी अपनी क्षमता होती है। बच्चों के साथ समय बिताना, उन्हें समझना, उनकी परेशानियों को सुनना और उनका मनोबल बढ़ाना ज़रूरी है। परीक्षा के समय घर का वातावरण शांत और सकारात्मक होना चाहिए। माता-पिता को बच्चों से केवल अच्छे अंक नहीं, बल्कि उनके प्रयासों की सराहना करनी चाहिए। साथ ही, उन्हें यह विश्वास दिलाना चाहिए कि असफलता भी सीखने का हिस्सा है और वे हर परिस्थिति में उनके साथ हैं (सेन, 2021)। इसलिए परीक्षा तनाव को हल्की समस्या समझना बड़ी भूल

है। यह एक गंभीर मानसिक स्वास्थ्य का मुद्दा है, जिसका समय रहते समाधान करना जरूरी है। न केवल परिवार और शिक्षक, बल्कि समाज को भी इस समस्या को समझना चाहिए और विद्यार्थियों के प्रति अपने रवैये को सकारात्मक और सहयोगी बनाना चाहिए (सिंह, 2020)। इस शोध पत्र में परीक्षा तनाव के कारणों, उसके प्रभावों और इससे निपटने के उपायों को विस्तार से समझाने का प्रयास किया गया है।

परीक्षा तनाव के कारण

1. **अत्यधिक शैक्षणिक दबाव:** माध्यमिक स्तर पर पाठ्यक्रम की कठिनता और परीक्षा की तैयारी का दबाव विद्यार्थियों पर मानसिक बोझ डालता है। साथ ही, प्रोजेक्ट, गृहकार्य और समयसीमा का पालन करने की जिम्मेदारी विद्यार्थियों के लिए तनाव का बड़ा कारण बन जाती है (जोशी, 2020)। परीक्षा के दिनों में यह दबाव कई गुना बढ़ जाता है, जिससे विद्यार्थी मानसिक थकान और घबराहट का अनुभव करने लगते हैं।

2. **अभिभावकों की अधिक अपेक्षाएं:** कई माता-पिता अपने बच्चों से केवल श्रेष्ठ प्रदर्शन की आशा रखते हैं और औसत या असफलता की स्थिति में उन्हें तिरस्कार का सामना करना पड़ता है (गुप्ता, 2017)। यह बच्चों के भीतर भय, असुरक्षा और दबाव उत्पन्न करता है, जो उनकी मानसिक शांति को भंग कर देता है।

3. **करियर और भविष्य की चिंता:** माध्यमिक कक्षा के बाद विद्यार्थियों को अपने करियर का चुनाव करना होता है। इस चयन को लेकर असमंजस और असफलता की आशंका विद्यार्थियों में गहरे तनाव का कारण बनती है (कुमार, 2018)। कई बार यह चिंता इतनी गहराई तक जाती है कि उनका आत्मबोध और आत्मविश्वास कमजोर हो जाता है।

4. **सामाजिक तुलना और प्रतिस्पर्धा:** विद्यार्थियों को अक्सर उनके सहपाठियों और रिश्तेदारों के बच्चों से तुलना की जाती है। यह तुलना आत्म-संदेह को जन्म देती है और हीन भावना को बढ़ावा देती है (शर्मा, 2019)। प्रतिस्पर्धी माहौल में कमजोर विद्यार्थियों के लिए यह स्थिति और अधिक विकट हो जाती है।

5. **समय प्रबंधन की कमी:** परीक्षा की तैयारी के लिए समय का उचित नियोजन न होना विद्यार्थियों को तनावग्रस्त करता है। आखिरी समय पर पढ़ाई का दबाव, अपर्याप्त तैयारी और लगातार भागदौड़ विद्यार्थियों की मानसिक स्थिति को कमजोर बना देती है (जोशी, 2020)।

6. **शारीरिक स्वास्थ्य की उपेक्षा:** परीक्षा के समय विद्यार्थी अक्सर नींद की कमी, असंतुलित भोजन और व्यायाम की उपेक्षा करते हैं (आईसीएमआर, 2020)। इसका सीधा असर उनके मानसिक स्वास्थ्य पर पड़ता है, जिससे वे जल्दी थक जाते हैं, चिड़चिड़े हो जाते हैं और एकाग्रता में कमी आती है।

7. **भावनात्मक समर्थन का अभाव:** कई विद्यार्थी अपने डर, असफलता या असमंजस को खुलकर साझा नहीं कर पाते। घर या विद्यालय में सकारात्मक संवाद की कमी के कारण वे स्वयं को अकेला महसूस करते हैं (यूनिसेफ, 2020) और यह अकेलापन उनके तनाव को और गहरा कर देता है और मानसिक समस्याओं का कारण बनता है।

परीक्षा तनाव के प्रभाव:

1. **मानसिक स्वास्थ्य पर प्रभाव:** परीक्षा तनाव विद्यार्थियों के मानसिक स्वास्थ्य को सबसे अधिक प्रभावित करता है। यह लगातार चिंता, भय और असमंजस की स्थिति को जन्म देता है। विद्यार्थियों में बेचैनी, घबराहट, नकारात्मक सोच और अवसाद विकसित होने लगते हैं (डब्ल्यूएचओ, 2019)। कई बार यह समस्या इतनी गंभीर हो जाती है कि विद्यार्थियों को मनोवैज्ञानिक सहायता की आवश्यकता पड़ती है।
2. **शारीरिक स्वास्थ्य पर प्रभाव:** मानसिक तनाव का सीधा प्रभाव शारीरिक स्वास्थ्य पर पड़ता है। लंबे समय तक तनाव रहने पर सिरदर्द, बदन दर्द, अपच, गैस, थकावट, मांसपेशियों में खिंचाव जैसी समस्याएं उत्पन्न होती हैं। नींद की कमी से इम्यून सिस्टम कमजोर हो जाता है, जिससे विद्यार्थी बार-बार बीमार पड़ने लगते हैं।
3. **शैक्षणिक प्रदर्शन पर असर:** परीक्षा तनाव के कारण विद्यार्थियों की एकाग्रता शक्ति कम हो जाती है। वे पढ़ाई में ध्यान केंद्रित नहीं कर पाते, जिससे स्मृति क्षमता भी प्रभावित होती है। प्रश्नों का उत्तर भूल जाना, कंफ्यूजन और पेपर अधूरा छोड़ना जैसी समस्याएं आम हो जाती हैं।
4. **व्यक्तित्व विकास पर प्रभाव:** तनाव में रहने वाले विद्यार्थी धीरे-धीरे आत्मविश्वास खोने लगते हैं। वे निर्णय लेने से डरते हैं और असफलता का डर उनके व्यवहार में झलकने लगता है। यह उनके जीवन में आगे जाकर भी उनके नेतृत्व क्षमता और आत्मनिर्भरता पर नकारात्मक असर डालता है।
5. **सामाजिक संबंधों पर प्रभाव:** तनावग्रस्त विद्यार्थी सामाजिक बातचीत से दूरी बनाने लगते हैं। वे मित्रों और परिवार के साथ खुलकर संवाद नहीं करते, जिससे रिश्तों में दरार आ सकती है। सामाजिक अलगाव से वे और अधिक निराश और अकेले महसूस करने लगते हैं।
6. **आत्महत्या की प्रवृत्ति:** जब परीक्षा तनाव असहनीय हो जाता है और विद्यार्थियों को कोई रास्ता नजर नहीं आता, तब वे आत्मघाती कदम उठाने की ओर भी बढ़ सकते हैं (आईसीएमआर, 2020)। यह स्थिति अत्यंत दुखद है और समाज व परिवार के लिए चिंता का विषय बनती है।

आत्मबोध और भावनात्मक संतुलन:

आत्मबोध का अर्थ है स्वयं को पहचानना, अपनी योग्यताओं, सीमाओं और कमजोरियों को समझना। जब विद्यार्थी आत्मबोध से युक्त होते हैं, तो वे अपनी वास्तविक क्षमताओं को पहचानते हैं और अवास्तविक अपेक्षाओं से बचते हैं। इससे वे अपनी कमजोरियों को स्वीकार कर उन्हें सुधारने का प्रयास करते हैं (सिंह, 2020)। आत्मबोध न केवल तनाव को कम करता है, बल्कि आत्मविश्वास और सकारात्मक सोच को भी मजबूत बनाता है। आत्मबोध का अर्थ है स्वयं को समझना और अपनी क्षमताओं व सीमाओं को पहचानना। उदाहरण के लिए, यदि कोई विद्यार्थी गणित में कमजोर है, तो उसे निराश होने की बजाय अतिरिक्त अभ्यास और सहायता लेकर सुधार करना चाहिए। आत्मबोध उस समय काम आता है जब विद्यार्थी जानता है कि वह किन विषयों में अच्छा है और कहां उसे अधिक प्रयास की आवश्यकता है। भावनात्मक संतुलन का अर्थ है विपरीत परिस्थितियों में भी स्थिर रहना। उदाहरण के लिए, यदि परीक्षा में अपेक्षित अंक न आएं, तो घबराने की बजाय अनुभव से सीख लेकर अगली बार बेहतर प्रदर्शन की ओर बढ़ना चाहिए। भावनात्मक रूप से संतुलित विद्यार्थी संकट की घड़ी में भी अपने निर्णयों को सही दिशा में ले जाते

हैं और धैर्य बनाए रखते हैं। वे नकारात्मक विचारों को नियंत्रित करने और सकारात्मक दृष्टिकोण अपनाने में सक्षम होते हैं। यह संतुलन परीक्षा के दबाव से निपटने में अत्यंत सहायक होता है (सेन, 2021)।

आत्मबोध और भावनात्मक संतुलन की चुनौतियाँ

- **स्व-स्वीकृति की कमी:** बहुत से विद्यार्थी अपनी असफलताओं को एक दाग की तरह मानते हैं और खुद को कमतर समझने लगते हैं। वे यह स्वीकार नहीं कर पाते कि गलतियां और असफलताएं सीखने की प्रक्रिया का हिस्सा हैं। इससे उनमें आत्मविश्वास की कमी और मानसिक असंतुलन पैदा होता है।

- **निरंतर तुलना:** विद्यार्थियों को परिवार और समाज की ओर से निरंतर दूसरों से तुलना का सामना करना पड़ता है। यह तुलना उनके भीतर हीन भावना और निराशा को जन्म देती है। वे स्वयं को दूसरों की उपलब्धियों के मापदंड पर तौलते हैं और धीरे-धीरे आत्म-संदेह से ग्रस्त हो जाते हैं।

- **असफलता का भय:** परीक्षा में विफल होने का डर विद्यार्थियों के लिए सबसे बड़ा मानसिक अवरोध बन जाता है। वे इस डर में ही जीने लगते हैं कि अगर वे असफल हुए तो परिवार, शिक्षकों और समाज के सामने उनका सम्मान घट जाएगा। यह डर उनकी एकाग्रता और प्रदर्शन को बुरी तरह प्रभावित करता है।

- **नकारात्मक सोच:** परीक्षा तनाव के दौरान बार-बार असफलता का अनुभव करने वाले विद्यार्थी अपने अंदर नकारात्मक विचारों को जन्म देते हैं। वे हर स्थिति में नकारात्मक पहलू देखने लगते हैं और निराशा में डूब जाते हैं। यह मानसिक स्थिति उन्हें किसी भी कार्य में रुचि नहीं लेने देती।

- **भावनाओं को नियंत्रित न कर पाना:** परीक्षा के दबाव में विद्यार्थियों की भावनाएं असंतुलित हो जाती हैं। वे छोटी-छोटी बातों पर गुस्सा या निराश हो जाते हैं। कई बार उनकी घबराहट इतनी अधिक हो जाती है कि वे रोने लगते हैं या अपने आप में सिमट जाते हैं।

- **परिवार और विद्यालय से समर्थन की कमी:** जब विद्यार्थी को उचित मार्गदर्शन और सकारात्मक समर्थन नहीं मिलता, तो वह खुद को अकेला और असहाय महसूस करता है। इस स्थिति में उसे न केवल पढ़ाई से अरुचि हो जाती है, बल्कि वह मानसिक रूप से भी कमजोर हो जाता है। यह अकेलापन आगे चलकर गंभीर मानसिक समस्याओं का कारण बन सकता है।

समाधान और सुझाव:

- **समय प्रबंधन का प्रशिक्षण:** विद्यार्थियों को पढ़ाई, विश्राम और मनोरंजन के बीच संतुलन बनाना चाहिए। टाइम-टेबल बनाना, प्राथमिकताओं को तय करना और कार्यों को समय पर पूरा करने की आदत डालनी चाहिए।
- **मनोवैज्ञानिक परामर्श और सहायता:** स्कूलों में नियमित रूप से काउंसलिंग सत्र आयोजित करने चाहिए, जहां विद्यार्थी अपने मानसिक तनाव और चिंताओं को साझा कर सकें। प्रशिक्षित काउंसलर के माध्यम से मानसिक स्वास्थ्य पर जागरूकता बढ़ाई जानी चाहिए (एनसीईआरटी, 2019)।

- **आत्मबोध का विकास:** विद्यार्थियों को उनकी प्रतिभा और क्षमताओं को पहचानने के लिए प्रेरित करना चाहिए । सफलता के छोटे-छोटे अनुभव उनके आत्मविश्वास को मजबूत करते हैं । शिक्षकों और अभिभावकों को विद्यार्थियों को लगातार सकारात्मक प्रतिक्रिया देनी चाहिए।
- **योग, ध्यान और व्यायाम:** योग और ध्यान तनाव को कम करने में अत्यंत सहायक होते हैं । विद्यार्थियों को नियमित रूप से योगासन, प्राणायाम और ध्यान का अभ्यास करना सिखाया जाए ताकि उनका मन शांत और एकाग्र रह सके (सीबीएसई, 2020) ।
- **सकारात्मक संवाद और प्रोत्साहन:** अभिभावकों और शिक्षकों को विद्यार्थियों से लगातार सकारात्मक संवाद बनाए रखना चाहिए । उनकी असफलताओं पर डांटने के बजाय उन्हें सिखाने और प्रोत्साहित करने का रवैया अपनाना चाहिए ।
- **प्रतिस्पर्धा के बजाय सहयोग का माहौल:** विद्यालयों में प्रतिस्पर्धा की बजाय सहयोग और समूह में सीखने की संस्कृति को बढ़ावा देना चाहिए ताकि विद्यार्थी एक-दूसरे से सीख सकें और तनाव महसूस न करें (डब्ल्यूएचओ, 2019) ।
- **खेल और सांस्कृतिक गतिविधियों में भागीदारी:** विद्यार्थियों को केवल पढ़ाई तक सीमित न रखते हुए खेल, संगीत, नृत्य और कला जैसी गतिविधियों में भाग लेने के लिए प्रेरित करना चाहिए। यह उनकी रचनात्मकता और मानसिक स्वास्थ्य को संतुलित करता है (यूनिसेफ, 2020) ।

निष्कर्ष:

माध्यमिक शिक्षा के स्तर पर परीक्षा तनाव केवल एक अस्थायी समस्या नहीं है, बल्कि यह एक गंभीर मानसिक और सामाजिक चुनौती है । जब विद्यार्थियों को अत्यधिक दबाव, तुलना, और असफलता का भय सताता है, तब उनका मानसिक संतुलन डगमगाने लगता है । यह तनाव यदि अनदेखा किया जाए तो न केवल उनके वर्तमान शैक्षणिक प्रदर्शन को प्रभावित करता है, बल्कि उनके संपूर्ण व्यक्तित्व विकास, आत्मविश्वास और भविष्य की योजनाओं पर भी नकारात्मक असर डालता है । इसलिए इस शोध से यह स्पष्ट होता है कि समाधान के प्रयासों को बहुआयामी होना चाहिए । विद्यालयों को चाहिए कि वे पाठ्यक्रम को बोझिल बनाने की बजाय व्यावहारिक, समझ आधारित शिक्षा दें। अभिभावकों को चाहिए कि वे बच्चों को खुले दिल से समझें, उनकी भावनाओं का सम्मान करें और उनके साथ सच्चा संवाद बनाए रखें । समाज को भी प्रतिस्पर्धा की दौड़ में बच्चों को केवल अंक और रैंक तक सीमित करने की बजाय उन्हें जीवन कौशल और मानसिक मजबूती की ओर प्रेरित करना चाहिए । इसके अलावा, विद्यार्थियों को भी आत्मचिंतन और स्व-मूल्यांकन की आदत विकसित करनी चाहिए। उन्हें यह समझना होगा कि असफलता अंत नहीं है, बल्कि सीखने का अवसर है । योग, ध्यान और नियमित व्यायाम को दिनचर्या का हिस्सा बनाकर वे अपने मन को स्थिर रख सकते हैं । माध्यमिक शिक्षा स्तर पर परीक्षा तनाव को हल्के में नहीं लिया जा सकता। यह विद्यार्थियों के मानसिक स्वास्थ्य, आत्मबोध और भावनात्मक संतुलन पर सीधा असर डालता है। यदि इस समस्या का समाधान समय रहते नहीं किया गया, तो यह उनके भविष्य को गंभीर रूप से प्रभावित कर सकता है । इसलिए, विद्यालयों को व्यावहारिक और संवादमूलक शिक्षा प्रणाली अपनानी चाहिए । अभिभावकों को बच्चों के साथ मित्रवत संबंध स्थापित करते हुए उनके आत्मविश्वास को बढ़ावा देना चाहिए। समाज को भी प्रतिस्पर्धा के

बजाय सहयोग की भावना को बढ़ावा देना आवश्यक है। विद्यार्थियों को भी चाहिए कि वे अपनी क्षमताओं पर विश्वास रखें, असफलता को सीखने का अवसर मानें और नियमित योग, ध्यान तथा व्यायाम को अपनी दिनचर्या में शामिल करें। यदि ये प्रयास सामूहिक रूप से किए जाएं, तो निश्चित रूप से विद्यार्थी न केवल परीक्षा में बल्कि जीवन की हर चुनौती में सफल होंगे। अंततः, परीक्षा तनाव से निपटना केवल विद्यार्थियों की जिम्मेदारी नहीं है; यह परिवार, विद्यालय और समाज का साझा दायित्व है। यदि सभी मिलकर सकारात्मक वातावरण प्रदान करें, प्रोत्साहन दें और सहयोग की भावना को मजबूत करें, तो निश्चित ही विद्यार्थी हर चुनौती का सामना आत्मविश्वास और धैर्य के साथ कर पाएंगे और अपने जीवन में सफलता की ओर अग्रसर हो सकेंगे।

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